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EDUCATION WITH PRODUCTION IN ZIMBABWE : IN SEARCH OF CURRICULUM REFORMS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY
VIMBISAI GERTRUDE NHUNDU

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

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This thesis is most affectionately dedicated to fond memories of

My Father

Joseph Tembo Nyakupinda

Whose Courage and Perseverance in life remain the most precious virtues he bequeathed me,

and

My Mother

Maria Matsika

For your unwavering support and understanding

ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe, a landlocked country in Southern Africa, was officially colonized by Britain in 1890 and remained under colonial rule until 1980. When Britain was granting independence to its African colonies in the 60s, the white colonial government in power in the then Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence from Britain rather than hand over power to the majority blacks. Following this Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) and Britain's reluctance to force the minority white government to surrender power, blacks took up arms to liberate themselves.

While in exile waging a guerilla war, the nationalists set up an alternative political and educational system founded on socialist principles. Of importance to this study is the education system, called Education with Production (EWP), which was first practised in camp schools in exile. The system was found appropriate for the development needs of a future independent Zimbabwe because it links theory with practice and empowers students by equipping them with practical work related skills for use after school. This development-oriented curriculum is now being pilot-tested in ten schools in Zimbabwe under the aegis of a non-governmental organization, the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP).

The present study was primarily carried out to investigate the implementation of EWP by engaging people in government, ZIMFEP, and piloting schools in conversations about this curriculum reform. Secondly, the study offered participants the opportunity to expose implementation constraints and explore possibilities of EWP in relation to its role in national development.

Being aware of the limitations of an empirical analytical approach to researching human understanding, hermeneutics as a way of arriving at a deeper understanding and supported by a semiotic attentiveness to conversational language was used as the research and interpretation approach in this study. Hermeneutic conversations were, therefore,

engaged with participants to explore their understandings and meanings of EWP and how it contributes to national development.

These conversations uncovered that while EWP is still accepted as a sound educational alternative to the inherited colonial education system, its implementation is faced with many structural and operational problems. One such problem arises from the conflict between the development paradigm subsumed under EWP and the Western development model imposed on Zimbabwe under the World Bank/IMF supported Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP). The other problem relates to the government's reluctance to provide ZIMFEP with the political and logistical support it initially promised. It also emerged that EWP had become marginalized at the national policy planning level and that the implementation process had gradually slowed down.

The study concludes by drawing upon insights gained from the understanding of participants' voices and our reflections to explore possibilities with Education with Production and national development in Zimbabwe.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CDU	=	Curriculum Development Unit
EWP	=	Education with Production
ESAP	=	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GNP	=	Gross National Product
MOE	=	Ministry of Education
NGO	=	Non-Governmental Organization
UDI	=	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
ZANU	=	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	=	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIMFEP	=	Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production

Chapter 1

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

A. The Twofold Context of the Study

The background of this study is twofold. It is both autobiographical and historical in context. The autobiographical perspective of this study provides a digest of my educational journey across time covering colonial, exile and post independence periods. In this section I trace my own educational journey and reveal my struggles within a colonial education system where I located myself during the formative stage of my educational career. The educational journey takes me across time to re-live my experiences as a teacher, educator and administrator before and after independence. An exposé of my experiences and the pain and freedom of life in exile and as an educator during years of colonial resistance is provided and contrasted with my experiences of 'western' education during the later part of my educational career as a graduate student in Canada. This autobiographical background also lays the ground for my present situatedness wherein I find myself being sandwiched between the three worlds of

a) post-independence realities in Zimbabwe,

b) revolutionary ideals acquired in exile during the liberation war for Zimbabwean independence, and

c) Western approaches to education and development to which my western education has exposed me.

The historical background, on the other hand, traces Zimbabwe's experiences with educational change and alternative development. Hence, this section chronicles Zimbabwe's experiences with development education starting from the days of colonial

resistance when Education with Production (EWP) was first introduced in camp schools in exile, to independent Zimbabwe when the new government declared itself socialist and later during post-independence when the government revised its ideological stance in response to conditional aid of IMF and the World Bank.

Autobiographical Context

In telling the story of Education with Production curriculum reforms and their role in national development in Zimbabwe, I believe that I am also telling my own story as a student and teacher, before and after independence, and educator and administrator in exile during the years of colonial resistance, and later as a graduate student in Canada where I received my western education. In undertaking this metaphorical journey across time and chronicling my educational experiences I have afforded myself the chance to look back and critically reflect on the past and present history of education in Zimbabwe and the way that it has been linked to issues of national development.

This critical reflection has allowed Zimbabwean educators who participated in this enquiry, myself included, to explore our understanding of 'national development' and see how we can play our part in the quest for 'relevant' development for Zimbabwe.

Recounting My Story

I belong to that generation of students who left Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) at the peak of the liberation war to join the liberation forces in neighbouring countries. I believe now that, as students, our exodus from Rhodesia was our way of saying 'No' to the colonial education we were receiving. Thousands and thousands of students and young children, most of them orphaned by war, left the then Rhodesia during the 1970-1975 mass exodus. We did not know where we were going or what would happen to us. We did not care any more about what would happen to us on the way or when we got 'there'. All we

wanted to do was to get away from an intolerable colonial life and colonial education.

The colonial education which we had been getting was of little value to us. During my secondary education, I remember having to memorize everything that the teacher taught us and all that we read. At the end of every week we were given tests where we were expected to reproduce what we had learnt in exact detail and order. I especially used to dread the end of week maths tests and the initial two lashes for every wrong answer because I was not good at maths. I have carried this dread and hatred of mathematics up to now.

All the other subjects on the curriculum were taught for this limited purpose: to pass examinations. The teacher and the texts 'transmitted' knowledge to us which we were expected to reproduce during examinations. The 'grand finale' came at the end of our secondary education, with the final examinations that were set and marked in Britain. "Cambridge School Certificates", those ignoble pieces of paper which signify secondary school completion, were also from Britain.

This type of education was criticized by black nationalists and white liberals for being too elitist, academically oriented and irrelevant to national development needs. This education system also failed to provide the knowledge, needs, skills, attitudes and values that would help black learners lead productive lives in society (Riddell, 1980 and Nhundu, forthcoming).

Most of what we learnt in school was 'foreign' knowledge and context which I have been unable to use. The geography, for example, was mostly that of Britain, North and South America, Australia, New Zealand and other foreign countries, but nothing about my country. I remember one of my geography examination questions which asked for a description of 'my' journey by train across Canada, through the Prairies and across the Rocky Mountains to Vancouver in British Columbia. We were expected to describe all the landmarks and activities carried out in each province we passed on our way.

I was very excited ten years later when I got a scholarship to study in Canada. This was a rare chance of actually being able to see what I had learnt. I remember insisting to my husband that we could not go back home before going on a 'journey' from the Vancouver Expo, across the Prairies and all the way to the east. We did, but I bored my husband when I started playing the role of a tour guide. My husband had not done geography in high school.

The Journey of Resistance

Days upon days of walking took me and thirty other students to a military camp in Mozambique. On the day following our arrival we were taken to a Zimbabwean military camp where nationalist guerillas were training somewhere in the thick bushes of Mozambique. We spent the next six months undergoing military and political training. After these six months we were 'sorted' out and 'deployed' to our 'missions', a term that was used to refer to an assignment given to combatants.

I was fifteen years old then. Those like me who were too young to go to the front to fight and who had received some secondary education were given the 'mission' of teaching the many younger children of school-going age who were arriving each day. Most of these children had watched their parents being killed by the Rhodesian soldiers and had horror stories to tell. As teachers we were, therefore, expected to give emotional counselling to our students as well as teach them and act as substitute parents.

Some of the 'new teachers' were deployed to already existing school camps. I was to join the group which was given a thousand children and was to start a new camp school. We were just left in the middle of the bush with no books, no desks, no black boards, no writing materials. We also did not have enough food. All that we had were the children and vast amounts of land at our disposal. We straight away put these resources to work and produced everything that we needed. Every day of my teaching was a challenge

because one had to be very imaginative and resourceful in order to survive.

A research unit was later set up in the camp which had the task of developing a curriculum, preparing teaching and learning materials and giving assistance and training to new teachers. I joined the research unit after two years of teaching and teacher training. In the research unit we tried to make the curriculum reflect our lived experiences which comprised the trials and tribulations of colonial Rhodesia and the hardships of self-sufficiency and imminent threat of enemy bombings in camp schools. We had no choice in camp schools but to build our own shelter, grow our own food, make our own clothes, and do everything else for ourselves. Our curriculum had to take all this and other lived experiences into consideration. These realities and experiences in camp schools contextualized the beginning of our initiatives with productive education which we later called 'education with production' (EWP). Nhundu (forthcoming) came to the same conclusion when he described the genesis of EWP under camp school conditions as:

> What initially started as a battle for survival through attempts by refugee school children to fend for themselves by engaging in activities such as agriculture production, construction, leather work and sewing was gradually developed into an educational concept grounded on socialist philosophy (p.15).

In the research unit, set up to guide all camp schools, we strived to produce teaching and learning materials meant to help 'liberate' the minds of the teachers and students from 'colonialism'. We discouraged the colonial 'banking' methods of teaching and encouraged participatory and critical inquiry approaches to teaching and learning. We taught teachers about the liberation theories of education, like that of Freire, which ask all teaching to be student centred in a way in which students are engaged in dialogical relationships with the teachers. From the classrooms, the teachers and students would go together to the production sites, be it the garden or the newsletter, and produce together using the theory gained from classroom teaching.

The constant attacks and bombings we experienced from the Rhodesian army did not make things any easier for us but we never gave up. We lost fellow teachers and students in these attacks, and often witnessed them being killed. But we always moved on to more remote areas to start all over again. I think that these painful experiences hardened us and made us more determined to make the best out of the worst.

My teaching years in exile influenced me personally as a teacher and as a teacher educator. I was made aware of many other values of education besides those of reproducing learned knowledge in examinations that I was accustomed to as a student in Rhodesia. I learned that a personally satisfying education is one which values the human being and can be made to develop a person more fully. I learned that a teacher could learn *from* and *with* the children. I also learned to value each teaching day I lived, for we did not know how long or short we would live and we needed to make the most out of that life.

The Return From Exile

In 1980 we triumphantly returned home from exile to an independent Zimbabwe following the first multi-racial elections which were won by the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), one of the two liberation movements that had waged a guerilla war from Mozambique, a party that I belonged to and which I worked for throughout my exile days in Mozambique. I continued to be a teacher, but this time in a world of tension, contradictions and uncertainties. Colonialism and liberation were at contact and were 'rubbing against each other'. Here we were, with all our revolutionary zeal and ideals but surrounded by the reality of an entrenched colonial education system which had remained unchanged and immune to the new political dispensation. We could 'sloganeer' as much as we wanted, but the reality was that our school children from the resistance had to write and pass the traditional "Cambridge School Certificate" examinations or sink. The teaching that I had loved so much was becoming hollow, marginalized and gradually turning into the

'unknown' to me. How to reconcile colonial education and 'revolutionary' education became our biggest nightmare. The government eventually resolved this dilemma by creating separate pilot schools which would continue experimenting with the innovative curriculum of the schools in exile. The Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP), a non-governmental organization, was then established and given the task of carrying out these EWP experiments in ten pilot schools.

Contemporary Zimbabwe

Independent Zimbabwe inherited an education system which was supporting a colonial and capitalist socio-economic and political setting. Colonial education taught the values of individualism, competitiveness, passive acceptance and dependency (Zimbabwe, 1981). These values were at variance with qualities which the children in exile had imbibed. As I have indicated, our teachers and children from the revolution found it difficult to fit into such an education system.

The government of newly independent Zimbabwe decided to adopt the theoretical principles of the 'exile' educational experiences of Education with Production (EWP) as an alternative to the inherited colonial education system. EWP was seen as an alternative which would be more relevant to the Zimbabwean child as well as to the development needs of the country than the colonial abstract educational forms. It was decided that all the children from exile would be settled on ten derelict commercial farms where they would 'pilot' experiments on EWP. The plan was for pilot schools to experiment with and fine tune EWP practices and prepare them for adoption as the curriculum model for the country (ZIMFEP, 1984).

At independence in 1980 Zimbabwe proclaimed itself a socialist country which was committed to scientific socialism as the basis for its development. The official position was that education was a central focus of the revolutionary struggle and the key to radical

development (Mugabe, 1986 and Banana, 1986). EWP was perceived as an important tool for national transformation and development. According to Jansen (1990), ZIMFEP pilot schools were expected to demonstrate, on an experimental basis, the application of socialism to education by reducing the gap between mental and productive labour, fostering co-operative development strategies and increasing productive employment.

The research unit concept from the resistance days was expanded into a secretariat of EWP which was based in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. This secretariat was called the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP). It had the task of coordinating all the 'piloting' experiences of the ten EWP schools. At the official launching of Zimfep, Mutumbuka (1984:89), the first education minister of independent Zimbabwe, argued that:

> We could not make changes on a national scale without a preparatory phase of experimentation and planning. Before we can launch a new system of education a lot of spade work must be done. We need to draw up an entirely new curriculum, to write new textbooks, to train a new type of teacher and to convince parents and Ministry officials to accept the changes. ZIMFEP is the instrument that can do that spade work. It has flexibility and the freedom to try out new things and to make recommendations to the Ministry based on the experiments it is conducting at ten pilot schools throughout the country. These schools are laboratories for change where new ideas can be tested. We are not starting from scratch since we had already established a most solid foundation in the liberation schools that were set up during the struggle.

I was one of the curriculum research officers and later became the head of the education department in ZIMFEP. This active involvement has now given me the advantage of looking back from a distance and making a critique of ZIMFEP's experiments. In its experiments, ZIMFEP defined its task as working out an education system which was relevant to the needs of a developing Zimbabwe. It consciously defined itself in opposition to the colonial education system which catered only for the needs and interests of colonialism at the expense of the local population. According to ZIMFEP (1984) education and production, theory and practice, academic and productive skills were

to be intertwined in ways which would give relevancy to education, while at the same time striving to develop the individual and the country at large.

Western Exposure

Time passed and in 1985 I received a scholarship to study in Canada. For my Masters degree in Secondary Education (1985-1987) I studied the issue of an imposed foreign language and its effects on the development process of a nation emerging from colonialism. My research project was called "English as a Second Language in Zimbabwe: In search of a language for human fulfilment". The need to study the effects of a second language was influenced by my background as a secondary school English language teacher after independence when I found that the English syllabus was still using language which had colonial overtones. My Master's degree exposed me to ways of 'deconstructing' a language to expose its inner meaning and then re-construct it to fit specific needs.

After my Master's degree I went back home in 1987 where I re-joined the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP) as head of the Education Division. I was in charge of all educational activities of the organization; from curriculum planning, implementation, training programs to community education programs. I worked in this job until 1991 when I decided to come back to Canada for my PhD degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I took this opportunity to reflect on my work as an Education with Production (EWP) educator and, through my research study, allow other educators in Zimbabwe who were participants in this research to do the same.

Reflecting on my position

What I did not know when I came to Canada was that the western education I was exposing myself to would complicate my position in regards to issues of education and

development. My Western education put me in a sandwiched position. I feel that I am sandwiched between independence realities in Zimbabwe, my revolutionary ideals acquired during the liberation struggle days, and western approaches to education and development. Like Spivak (1990), I no longer feel comfortable in any of these three places. I have, out of necessity, decided to use this position to my advantage and help myself and other educators understand and critique these three worlds. Through this study I want to use this positioning to expose the assumptions, the lacunae, and the possibilities in these three worlds as they relate to issues of education and national development in Zimbabwe.

Who have I become from my being in these three worlds? Where do I belong? When Spivak (1990) found herself in the same situation of having to define her identity, she clung to her 'Indian Passport' and to her 'sari' even though she had received the 'green card' which made her a 'USA resident alien' and had married a white American man. In my case I want to 'cling' to my Africanness. I wish to be like Appiah's father who had to wear a white coat because he was a western trained medical doctor, but did not have to give up his 'ntoma', a 'toga' like cloth which he always wore in the world outside the hospital (Appiah, 1992:159). I think that such an identity would help me become a Zimbabwean who wants to construct a new identity from her 'three worlds' without losing myself.

B. Outlining the Problem

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to conduct an in depth examination of the concept and implementation of Education with Production (EWP) as a way of achieving desired national development ideals in Zimbabwe. It was hoped that such an investigation would give participants the opportunity to re-think the practical realities of education in Zimbabwe and find ways of improving teaching. To carry out this research I engaged myself and selected participants from among key education policy makers and EWP

educators in conversations exploring education and development issues and their significance to our country.

This investigation of issues of education and development offered participants the opportunity to reflect on their successes, failures and possibilities of an alternative system of education for development. We also looked at the limitations of EWP as a curriculum reform for development in Zimbabwe. Colonial and western modernization strategies for development are critiqued in this study in order to assess how these forms of "development models" are constraining indigenous development alternatives.

This thesis also explores the possibilities which exist for the creative alternative ways of 'being' which are different from the modernist ways of 'being' which developing countries like Zimbabwe are struggling to develop. The study further examines the implications of such development alternatives like EWP which are being tried out in Zimbabwe. Finally, it is hoped that this study surpassed the given and explored possibilities for new understandings of development.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following questions:

1. What does 'national development' mean to Zimbabwe and how does education fit into it?
2. What influenced EWP as a way of linking education to development in Zimbabwe?
4. What problems have been associated with western modernization models of development like the Human Capital and the Trickle Down theories for post independent Zimbabwe?
3. What kind of problematics have occurred with such reform strategies as EWP?
5. How are the various post-colonial critics contributing to a re-thinking of

development and school curriculum?

6. What possibilities exist for EWP as a step towards the development of alternative development strategies for Zimbabwe?

C. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is twofold; it provides scope for personal reflection and critiquing and informs contemporary practice on education and development. The study seeks to engage policy makers and educators in Zimbabwe, and myself, in reviewing and questioning our assumptions of issues of EWP and development. Such a process of questioning becomes a first step toward a critical consideration of how education and development might be re-constituted within a post- colonial framework of Zimbabwe.

On a personal level, this study was of significance to me because it provided me with the opportunity to re-orient myself in the problem position of a post-colonial critic in which I found myself being situated. The post-colonial critic perspective has helped me find my problem position. I also find myself being 'sandwiched and squeezed' within four conflicting cultures. I long for the 'nostalgic re-visitation' of an African traditional education and its wisdom tradition. I grew up in colonialism and I experienced its social, economic and cultural violence. I was actively involved in the fight against such violence. And now, I am being educated in the West where I have been exposed to some of its notions of development through 'modernization' which are increasingly receiving criticism from post-modernists, post-colonialists and others because of their failures and inappropriateness.

What then are my commitments and those of other educators like me for the future of our education? How can we use this 'privileged position', as Spivak (1990) has called it, to explore the possibilities of re-understanding the past and present, of blending the good from our past with the good from the present and create a meaningful future in our

educational and national development tasks? An exploration of possible answers to such questions was of significance to this study by making participants aware of possibilities and constraints of curriculum change for national development.

D. Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited as follows:

1. The ambiguity of Education with Production and vocational education is generally recognized within the education discourse in Zimbabwe and other African countries. Literature on vocational education in developing countries has defined vocational education as efforts by schools to include in their curriculum those practical subjects which are likely to generate among the students some basic knowledge, skills and dispositions that might prepare them to think of becoming skilled workers or to enter other manual occupations (von Borstel, 1991; Bacchus, 1987; Berman, 1971 and Foster, 1965). Education with Production fits into this definitional framework but goes beyond these parameters because of its emphasis in the integration of mental and manual work on an equal basis. The concept of EWP suggests that schools should not be narrowly academic, but should relate to life; that learning and work should be interrelated; that the individual should be multifaceted and be able to work with the mind and the body (a worker-intellectual). Accordingly, this study is delimited to the investigation of EWP as defined and understood here and, therefore, excludes vocational education.

2. Out of ten ZIMFEP schools only one school was studied in depth. For this reason, the study does not claim that what was happening at Taedza school (pseudonym) reflects what was happening in other ZIMFEP schools. The problems at Taedza school are generalizable to other ZIMFEP schools only to the extent where the causes of the problems are attributable to the Ministry of Education and ZIMFEP and not Taedza school administration, parents, teachers and students. Some of the implementation problems faced

by ZIMFEP schools are specific to each school. This is supported by Nhundu (forthcoming) in his study of all ten ZIMFEP schools in which he found that some of the factors accounting for success and/or failure in the implementation of EWP were specific to the implementing schools.

3. The study included only those Education with Production schools that are associated with ZIMFEP. There are a few schools in Zimbabwe which are a remnant of the colonial "F2 schools", which offered practical skills training to students who would have not been successful in primary school examinations. Because of rising numbers of educated unemployed youths, these schools now take students with secondary education and are also calling themselves EWP schools. These schools are not included in this study.

4. This study confines itself to examining EWP curriculum reforms for national development to Zimbabwe only. This delimitation in the scope of the study limits the generalizability of the findings reported in this study.

E. Organization of the Study

This study is organized into six chapters. Chapter One is an introduction to the study which outlines what Deleuze (1977) calls the "problem position". Deleuze defines a problem position as a more honest way of framing questions which clarify the place where a person is situated. For my purposes, Deleuze's notion of a problem position is an appropriate investigative approach because I cannot be completely 'clear' of the place I am already situated as an educator emersed in EWP formulations. It is only through a description of the problem situation, that of EWP and its relationship to national development, that this study can bring myself and other educators in Zimbabwe to understand and interpret issues of education and development in Zimbabwe.

Therefore in Chapter One the twofold background of the study (the personal and the historical) is introduced. This is the background from which this study originated. The

purpose, significance and limitations of the study are also presented in this introductory chapter.

Education with Production has met with resistance and implementation problems wherever it has been introduced (Nhundu, 1992 and von Borstel, 1991). Chapter Two seeks to situate these problems within their positions of construction in order to be able to "deconstruct" them. Thus placing EWP within its historical development helps to reveal its limitations as well as its strengths, which have always enabled the concept to rise again whenever it fell.

Chapter Three discusses the hermeneutic tradition and the use of conversations as a hermeneutical mode of inquiry. Guided by Gadamer's (1984) example of conversations as a way of maintaining the hermeneutic priority of the openness of the question, the study explores conversation as a research mode in investigating EWP and its link to national development strategy in Zimbabwe. Semiotics is also inquired into in this chapter since the study uses it to get at the meaning of words used by the participants. This is done in order to provide deeper understanding of what is really going on with EWP curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Four attempts to re-present the voices of educators in contemporary Zimbabwe who participated in this study, including teachers, Ministry of Education and ZIMFEP educators, policy makers and students. Chapter Five reflects on these representations and discusses the current status of EWP in Zimbabwe and its relationship to national development. A semiotic interpretation of the signs from the participants is also presented together with an interpretation of the whole signs system emerging from the study. This is done to reveal what Britzman (1991) would describe as Zimbabwe's "caughtness" and explore the "given and the possible" in bringing about meaningful curriculum and development change.

Chapter Six searches for possibilities for EWP and development in Zimbabwe. In

the final section of Chapter Six I explore my own "caughtness" and what I can offer for the improvement of education and development. My own analysis of the problems of EWP in Zimbabwe and possibilities for changing them is informed by my subject position of (a) a black woman who was educated in colonial Zimbabwe, and (b) an educator who was involved in the search of a revolutionary curriculum in the schools in exile during the liberation war. I juxtapose the two points of contradictory education to my present involvement in education in post independent Zimbabwe vis-a-vis my western education as a post graduate student in Canada. All this 'soul searching' is done in an attempt to explore possibilities for improvement in EWP as it relates to national development in Zimbabwe.

Chapter II

SOME PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION WITH PRODUCTION

Let us not try to be the best or worst of others, but let us make the effort to be the best of ourselves.
-Marcus Garvey-

If we want to turn Africa into a new Europe, then let us leave the destiny of our countries to Europeans. They will know how to do it better than the most gifted among us.
-Frantz Fanon-

A. Introduction

This chapter discusses the chronological history of productive education practices in Africa in general and Zimbabwe, in particular, and shows how these practices were linked to national development in pre-colonial, colonial and post independence Africa. Among questions raised and answered for each phase are: What was the purpose of education? How was education being linked to national development issues? and, What influenced the choice of productive education? It is argued in this chapter that although approaches to Zimbabwe's educational practices during these three periods had the same objective of linking education to development, the political intentions were different.

The review begins with the literature on pre-colonial education in Africa, particularly British colonial education which replaced traditional education in Anglophone Africa, including Zimbabwe. Colonial governments' attempts to 'industrialize' education in Africa are also reviewed in order to situate the problems of reforming the curriculum which are being experienced in Zimbabwe and other post-independent African governments. This historical analysis is necessary because, as Mandaza (1986) puts it:

> The analysis of the historical factors and processes leading to national independence constitute a necessary pre-condition for the understanding of the present and future developments of any post-colonial society... It is impossible to understand Africa's current condition without acknowledging imperialism as the basic cause (p. 11).

The 1960s' and 1970s' attempts to vocationalize curriculum in post-colonial Africa reflect Africa's recognition of the role of these historical factors and further underscore the resolve to restore to education the relevance of the African wisdom tradition which had been undermined by colonial education policies. These attempts to vocationalize the curriculum later became an important influence in the adoption of EWP in most newly independent African nations. This era is therefore examined in this chapter in order to show the interdependence of African educational reform efforts and the influence of colonial education in shaping education policies of newly independent African countries of the time. Accordingly, this study argues that Zimbabwe's independence fifteen years ago has benefitted from the historical development of education in Africa in that it was presented with several educational models to choose from while taking cognisance of pitfalls to avoid in pursuit of its curriculum reforms. The interpretation of field research on EWP in Zimbabwe will also consider how Zimbabwe has been able to use this 'advantaged' position.

B. Education in Pre-colonial Africa

With the failure of modernization strategies for development, a growing number of post-colonial African intellectual writings are showing a revived willingness to go back and re-examine the traditional African wisdom traditions and their approaches to education and development. This section looks at pre-colonial education in Africa, its wisdom and quality at a time when post-colonial critics, among them Said (1993), wa Thiongo (1993), Appiah (1992), Smith (1992) and Spivak (1990) are arguing that a recovery of pre-colonial wisdom and development traditions will bear the greatest positive contribution of formerly

colonized peoples in the post-industrial age.

The question which will be addressed here is of how possible it is to satisfy this 'nostalgia' for the past without having to 'go primitive' as Torgovick (1990) has put it. A critique of the African wisdom tradition is also useful when considering the possibilities of alternative development and education strategies in post-independent Zimbabwe and other African countries which share similar experiences.

The African Wisdom Tradition

Busia (1964) has stated that pre-colonial African education was a way of passing on to the young its accumulated knowledge to enable them to play adult roles and ensure the survival of their offspring and the continuity of the community. In short, Busia's claim is that education in traditional Africa was functional. It was relevant to the survival and well being of the individual, his/her immediate family and the community at large. The young were taught how to cope with their environment: how to farm, hunt, fish, prepare food, build a house, or run a home. The methods of teaching were informal, they learnt by participating in activities alongside their elders. They learnt by listening, by watching and by doing. In many practical ways, children learnt how to live as members of their communities (Busia, 1964).

Apart from passing on knowledge in this 'on the job training' way, the Africans also had a wisdom tradition which passed relevant knowledge to the young through folklore, rituals, proverbs, idioms, communal work songs, poetry, and many other informal ways of educating.

Okpewho (1985) observed that the narration of stories must have been one of the peak achievements in the development of communication in non-literate societies of Africa. Using the 'wit' of the narrative genius and the vitality of the songs of the group, folk tales spoke directly to and advised the community. They played a crucial role in the socio-

economic induction of the young and impart important values of holding the community together.

Wa Thiongo (1986:10), a renowned African literature writer, took up the theme of the African wisdom tradition and highlighted its role in the transmission of relevant knowledge when he cited the following fable:

> Hare, being small, weak but full of innovative wit and cunning, was our hero. We identified with him as he struggled against the brutes of prey like lion, leopard, hyena. His victories were our victories and we learnt that the apparently weak can outwit the strong. We followed the animals in their struggle and hostile nature - drought, rain, sun, wind - a confrontation often forcing them to search for forms of co-operation. But we were also interested in their struggles among themselves, and particularly between the beasts and the victims of prey. These twin struggles, against nature and other animals, reflected real-life struggles in the human world.

Wa Thiongo goes on to say:

> Not that we neglected stories with human beings as the main characters. There were two types of characters in such human-centred narratives: the species of truly human beings with qualities of courage, kindness, mercy, hatred of evil, concern for others; and a man- eat-man two-mouthed species with qualities of greed, selfishness, individualism and hatred of what was good for the co-operative community. Co-operation as the ultimate good in a community was a constant theme. It could unite human beings with animals against ogres and beasts of prey...(p.11).

Al-Shahi and Moore (1978:2) in, Wisdom from the Nile, describe folklore in Africa as being:

> Instruments of adaptation, socialization, and education, helping to introduce the society's assumptions and values to the young, to celebrate them or even to adopt them in the face of disorder and dissatisfaction - or even to legitimate or initiate social change.

Pre-colonial African education was in many ways a development strategy. The two were not separated.

C. Colonial Education in Africa

Colonialism changed all this, its effect was like a 'cultural bomb' which annihilated a peoples' belief in their names, in their language, in their environment, in their heritage, in their unity, in their capacity and ultimately in themselves. It made them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement (wa Thiongo, 1986). Colonial education, on the other hand, promoted purposes different from and often antagonistic to those witnessed in pre-colonial Africa. Development now meant natural and human resource exploitation of Africa for the interest of colonial masters and their international corporations. Thus, in tracing the history of colonial education in Africa with its racial discrimination, acculturation, social control, political legitimation, white supremacist and economic exploitative focus, the idea is to illustrate how different it was from the African wisdom tradition and further show how it influenced the development of redeeming education policies adopted by independent African countries.

Writings on colonial Africa documents the political and social purposes of education given to the Africans which ultimately lead to educating for the economic needs of the colonizers (Ubah, 1980; Atkinson, 1972 and Foster, 1965). These colonial economic needs were addressed by giving Africans an inferior kind of productive education to make them productive without competing with whites for more technical jobs.

Researchers on colonial education agree that in colonial Africa, education was used as an instrument for sustaining colonial power and the socio-economic exploitation of the African people (Bacchus, 1987; Mungazi, 1982 and Foster, 1965). In the early years of colonial rule education given to the Africans was for the twin purposes of evangelism and compliance. Most of what the colonial curriculum offered had no bearing on the lives and expectations of the local people. The 'civilizing' values of colonial African schooling undermined traditional value systems. As more and more Africans passed through colonial schools, there was a corresponding loss of the African wisdom tradition from generation to

generation. Most of the schools for blacks in Zimbabwe, for example, were mission boarding schools, far away from home. Thus, the written word was becoming more and more accessible to the youth than the oral tradition of 'wise old men and women' (Zvobgo, 1986).

Education for Cultural and Social Colonization

The missionaries were the first providers of formal education to Africans in British Colonial Africa. Their main objective was to provide just enough education to enable blacks to read the bible and be converted to Christianity. But as colonialism progressed, the type of education that the missionaries were providing was extended to include acculturation. Blacks were to be socialized into the European culture and value system. The African people were also being socialized into a work culture which would make them 'useful' to the economic needs of their masters. Education at this time was meant to produce Christian pupils who were diligent, obedient, straightforward, kind and god-fearing. Such a school graduate would fit well into a capitalist, colonial economy which was later to follow (Zvobgo, 1986).

In addition to instilling European values into Africans, education in colonial Africa including Zimbabwe was also used for the purposes of social control and sorting out who was to do what in the economic sector. Two separate education systems were created, one for the whites and the other for blacks. The white children's education concentrated on academic education and higher level technical education. The whites were being 'sorted out' for leadership roles in the society.

The black children's education, on the other hand, included agriculture and some basic industrial education which would allow them to serve better as semi-skilled wage labourers "who could not be allowed to compete with whites for the jobs of the formal sector" (Wilmer, 1973). Such was the colonial attitude that the white people should rule

and the black people should perpetually serve the whites (Ubah, 1980). The mentality and essence of colonial rule is graphically portrayed in Atkinson (1972) who tells a story about sixty pupils from Domboshawa, an industrial school in colonial Zimbabwe, who went to the office of the assistant district commissioner with complaints that they were not receiving adequate instruction in both industrial and literary work. According to Atkinson (p101), the pupils claimed that "the manager, a Reverend T. Alexander, had declared that he did not intend to teach them [Africans] to build square houses, since by so doing he would bring them into competition with European artisans" (p.101).

Commenting on the case of colonial Nigeria Clatworth (1971) said that the British rulers did not want to educate Africans for positions which provided jobs for themselves, and that the British knew that if they intensified the education of Nigerians they would hasten the end of colonial occupation. Colonial education for Nigeria, Zimbabwe and other British colonies was for acculturation, political legitimation of the colonizers and subjugation of the colonized into accepting white supremacy. Accordingly, the curricula for African schools was limited to providing skills which enhanced capitalist exploitation of the Africans and their countries. It paid no attention to national and personal development needs of the blacks.

Education for Political Legitimation

Bacchus (1974) has suggested that European colonization of Africa had two objectives: (1) the exploitation of the wealth of the colonies, and (2) the provision for the settlement of the excess population of Europe. From these two objectives it can be argued that the colonial governments needed to be accepted without resistance by the African populations. In order to gain this legitimation, the colonial government in Zimbabwe and other parts of Africa used force, religion and white superiority myths as well as education (Nhundu, 1992 and Ubah,1980).

The Myth of White Superiority

The school curriculum content of black children's education emphasized and glorified European culture, mores, and values at the same time degrading all that was African. What was European was labelled as good and superior while everything was African was labelled as bad and inferior. This superiority myth was also used to justify educational inequalities and explain why the blacks were to be ruled by the whites (Nhundu, 1992 and Mungazi, 1982).

Fearing that education would enable the Africans to threaten colonial domination, colonial governments deliberately created such myths of limited intellectual potential and inferior academic ability among the Africans. Educational programs were designed to preserve such myths. For example, primary reading textbooks were illustrated with pictures of white people only. Where pictures for blacks were used, these appeared as servants working in white homes or were portrayed working in inferior occupations. Thus, black primary school children, indoctrinated at an early age into accepting characterizations of blacks as an inferior race incapable of attaining greater heights, experienced loss of self-esteem, confidence and human dignity. These children were further made to succumb to widespread infantilism portrayals in their school textbooks and later in life. For example, whites, including little children, called black men and women "boy" and "girl", respectively.

Religion as Legitimation

Religion taught Africans to accept the position that one has in life, a position which was often said "had pleased God to call them" (Bacchus, 1974). Religion also taught the African children to 'turn the other cheek' to colonial exploitation rather than resist it. Mungazi (1982), tells us about the way some Bible stories went beyond moral teaching and became preparation ground for colonialism and capitalist exploitation. Examples of stories

chosen from the Bible to serve exploitative purposes include the story of the 'good samaritan'. This story was interpreted to mean that one must give, and give, without expecting anything in return. Another popular story was the story of the lonely old woman who gave the only penny she had to the church, hers would be the kingdom of heaven, so went the moral teaching.

In a similar way the story of Lazarus was interpreted to mean acceptance of poverty. Lazarus would sit begging at the gate of the rich man's estate. The moral teaching given for this story was that when he died, poor man Lazarus went to heaven while the rich man went to hell. The rich man cried to Lazarus to give him a drop of water when he was burning. Suffer here on earth, the children and converts were told, for tomorrow the Kingdom of heaven will be yours (Mungazi, 1982). In my elementary school days we were even taught to sing songs about such stories.

Education for Economic Exploitation

Industrial Education.

In 1899 an Education Ordinance of Native education was passed in colonial Zimbabwe. This Ordinance recommended that black schools had to teach industrial education as a way of grooming a semi-skilled labour force; a labour force which was necessary for the development of industrial complexes by acting only as helpers or aides to their white bosses (Mead, 1963). Commenting elsewhere, Bacchus (1987) said that this type of education was just enough to keep the colonial system ticking.

By the mid 1920s in Zimbabwe, the missionaries and liberal whites had begun to voice their concern about the limited scope of "Native" education. The black population had also started to show signs of dissatisfaction with the limited education being given to their children. The Legislative Assembly conceded to these demands by introducing some limited academic educational 'advancement' to those Africans who were to occupy junior

clerk positions in the civil service (Zvobgo, 1986). Such an education is what Atkinson (1972:90) called the "rough and ready fashion of the phrase book... a sternly utilitarian expedient".

The intention of this proposed academic 'advancement' in colonial Zimbabwe was the same as that observed by Foster (1965) in the case of Ghana: an attempt to educate a few of the local population to accept the colonizer's values, beliefs and assumptions of superiority, and to use some of these educated few as models for others who were aspiring to improve their conditions of life, as long as those 'aspirations' were deemed not to result in colonialism creating its own rivalries through education.

An 'unintended' outcome of this 'expansion' of education for the blacks was that it made the black population realize that book learning, as opposed to practical learning, was their only way to social mobility. As a result every parent did whatever was possible to help their children get an academic education while avoiding any manual related education. This remains, by far, the biggest colonial inheritance which is still causing a lot of resistance to EWP in Zimbabwe. Parker (1960) puts it more succinctly when he says:

> The African placed book learning on a pedestal, looked at it as a goal to be achieved, believed it would enable him to become a clerk, wear a white collar, and sit behind an important desk... He wanted academic education because it was kept from him and because he saw that Europeans placed high value on it (p.21).

As a result industrial education was regarded as the 'stumbling block' to their economic and social advancement. But despite the growing hatred by African parents and their children of the industrial education in favour of the more academic education, most colonial governments were determined to force practical education on the African population. Before 1920, such an education focused mainly on issues of hygiene, sanitation as well as nutrition. The hygiene and nutrition aspects were stressed in the education of girls because they were to work as domestic servants in white people's

homes.

In 1920 the British Colonial Office commissioned the Phelps-Stokes Fund, an institution responsible for 'Negro' education in the United States of America to visit Africa and make recommendations for an "appropriate" education system for Eastern, Western, Southern and Equatorial Africa. After two 'research' visits, the Phelps-Stokes commission recommended that industrial education be made compulsory in all African schools. A community education system which emphasized health and industrial learning was seen as a good way of educating the African child "for life" and to "develop his own potential for the development of his community" (Clatworthy 1971:14).

The second recommendation was that agriculture be made a compulsory subject in all 'native' schools. Berman (1974:142) commenting on this issue wrote that those given agricultural training were expected to provide the "cure for their poverty" and that the black man would be "happy and content with his lot on the land". The Phelps-Stokes foundation made an assumption that armed with education, the African child would be encouraged to stay in the village. It was hoped that urban migration would stop. In colonial Zimbabwe, for example, the above did not happen mostly because of the fact that the rural area where the students were supposed to go back to did not have suitable land for any agricultural improvement to take place.

This rural land poverty was the result of the 1930 Land Apportionment Act. This Act divided the country racially into African and European areas. Ninety per cent of the best agricultural land was given to whites. The black population went to reserves which were located in granitic sand velds which receive less and often unreliable rainfall. The land distribution was so unequally done that on average, each European farm was one hundred times as big as a reserve unit (Riddell, 1980).

From the foregoing, it becomes obvious that it was unlikely that the agriculturally trained youth would stay and 'improve' village farming. They left the villages to look for

employment in the cities. Thus, when Zimbabwe became independent in 1980, problems of overpopulation, landlessness, land degradation, and abject poverty endured by blacks were juxtaposed with land under utilization, affluence and extreme waste in the European areas (Mandaza, 1986).

Has the above situation changed? How does the present government visualize national 'development' in light of this reality? Is the policy of Education with Production taking this land issue into consideration? It is the intention of this study, among other things, to probe into such issues when studying Education with Production reforms in Zimbabwe.

Much of the colonial failure to vocationalize African education is attributed to different perceptions on curriculum relevancy which was predicated on racial issues. The African population, on the one hand, saw these reforms as a way of perpetuating their oppression and exploitation while, on the other hand, 'relevance' for the colonial governments meant an education which helped in keeping the black population in the villages or in lowly paid jobs on farms, plantations, mines and other white owned economic sectors. On the contrary, the African parents' idea of a relevant curriculum was of an education system which would enable them to climb up the social ladder; an education which could help their children to be employed in the better paying white collar jobs (Bacchus, 1974).

The economic and reward structures in the colonies also made industrial and labour related jobs undesirable. More status, prestige and money went to those who went into white collar jobs and had been academically educated. This was one of the main reasons why most African parents and their children were resisting industrial education (Nhundu, 1993; Zvobgo, 1986; Bacchus, 1974 and Foster, 1965). Berman (1971) firmly believed that African resistance to industrial education was caused by unequal salary structures of colonial governments. According to Berman (p.137), " Had the colonial government made

the rewards of an agricultural or vocational training superior to those of an academic education, there is every likelihood that the Africans would have responded with enthusiasm."

It will be important for the purposes of this study to understand why colonial governments, especially that of Zimbabwe, failed to coerce Africans into liking industrial education, even with the use of political, religious and military force. To what extent is post-independent Zimbabwe succeeding with the use of persuasion where colonial coercion failed? Also, given that most of the former colonial government bureaucrats and some `self-serving' elites now serving in the post-independent Zimbabwe government still believe that productive education is for the children of the poor and for the academically 'inferior' students, how far are EWP curriculum reforms succeeding? These are important historical and contemporary conditions which EWP schools in post independence Zimbabwe will have to address.

D. Contemporary Education with Production Practices

In the section on pre-colonial education it was argued that productive education (or learning by doing) was the way that the youth were taught to become active members of the community. The wisdom tradition was the major weapon for imparting the values of the community which included the values of production. The main influence to choose productive education during this period in African history was that of necessity.

Colonialism, as we have seen in the categories described earlier, had different intentions with its education which was provided on racial basis. Education was first used to domesticate and make the Africans docile so that they later provide cheap labour for the colonizers without questioning. According to Zvobgo (1986), the production of cheap labour was one of the main factors which influenced colonial governments to choose 'industrial' education for the Africans. The irrelevance and injustices of a racially

motivated colonial education system forced many newly independent African countries to search for appropriate emancipatory and development-oriented education practices as a way of redeeming the deleterious effects of colonial education. A critical examination of these development-oriented curricula shows that the works of people like John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Karl Marx and John Dewey have provided them with both their intellectual and philosophical base. In addition, current African productive education practices have been shaped by the African wisdom tradition and national realities. As a result, analyses of contemporary EWP practices in the following sections of this chapter explore, wherever possible, how current practices reflect or differ from both their intellectual foundations and the African wisdom tradition.

Education with production practices in contemporary Africa are organized around three major objectives of socio-political, economic and pedagogic considerations. These provide the framework which the current study uses to examine EWP practices in Zimbabwe to determine the extent to which they address national development needs of the country. The elements of this analytical framework are discussed below.

Socio-political Objectives

The social benefits derived from the combination of school and work are closely linked to the benefits accruing from the other two pillars of EWP, that is, the economic and pedagogical benefits. Thus, EWP should be conceived of as comprising these three interdependent rationales or pillars which combine together to make the educational experience a total social process which helps a nation through its development process.

EWP, for most post-colonial nations, was seen as a way of transforming inherited colonial structures (Nyerere, 1969), and symbolized a link with the African wisdom tradition of educating the youths for participating in the community. Colonial education had been, for the most part, abstract and purely academic because academic education was

considered superior to productive education. Collins and Gillespie (1983) have observed that in most colonial countries, manual work was for the academically inferior who were to perpetually occupy the lower echelons of society. This stigmatization of productive education was worsened when colonial masters allocated manual work and productive 'education' to the indigenous people only. Such were the education systems which post-colonial nations like Tanzania, India, Cuba and later Zimbabwe and many others sought to change. Transforming education in this regard was perceived to be a total social process which would help in the de-colonization of the learner's mind (both the colonized and colonizer's minds needed de-colonization). The process of de-colonization included the changing of school culture and attitude and the de-stigmatization of manual work so that pupils can respect and do it (Nyerere, 1973).

The school culture was also to be changed from that inherited from the colonial era which ascribed productive education to the poor natives who were deemed an "inferior race". Such a political and social position was important for nations which adopted EWP because of their socialist political orientation. In terms of EWP's intellectual origins, this was a departure from and rejection of John Locke's 17th Century "Plan" for the working schools for poor children and an acceptance of Rousseau's and Marx's thesis that productive education was for all.

According to Marx and Engels (1972:79), EWP has an 'egalitarianizing' socio-political dimension because:

> The division of labour which makes one a peasant, another a bookmaker, a third a factory worker and a fourth a speculator on the stock exchange will disappear completely. Education would give young people the chance of quickly attaining a practical mastery of the whole system of production. It will allow them to transfer in turn from one branch of education to another, in response to the requirements of society or their own personal inclination. Education will consequently free them from that one-sidedness which the contemporary division of labour forces each individual.

Thus in post-colonial African experiences, combining education and work has been attractive because of its opposition to class structure, its emphasis on physical work for self-sufficiency and autonomy. It has meant the development of an individual who is a functional member of society, not protected or isolated from, but exposed to social and economic realities (Mbeo,1994 and von Borstel, 1991).

Economic Objectives

This is the most clearly defined pillar of EWP and is directly related to national development. There has been a realization in developing countries that education is a costly industry, especially in newly independent countries where education which had been an exclusive right of the colonizer's child and a privilege for the colonized's child, became a right for everybody. In such post-colonial situations, as seen in the cases of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, education expenditure rose sharply soon after independence (Mbeo, 1994; Nhundu, 1992; Mtetwa, 1991; van Rensburg, 1977 and O'Conner, 1974). In Zimbabwe, for example, expenditure has not only been going up in absolute amounts, but as a percentage of the GNP, the national income and the total public revenues (Table 1).

Table 1

Zimbabwe Govt Expenditure on Education 1980-1989 (Source: Min. of Education and Culture, 1990)

Financial Year	Amount Allocated to Education (Z$000s)	% of National Budget	Allocation for Primary (Z$000s)	Allocation for Secondary(Z$000s)	Allocation Tr Ed (Z$000s)
1980/81	218 688	18. 1	146 214	54 764	5 949
1981/82	316 508	18.8	198 049	77 032	9 476
1982/83	408 743	17.7	259 706	92 414	11 126
1983/84	592 628	16.0	302 199	130 253	12 126
1984/85	516 765	14.0	306 169	135 383	16 231
1985/86	639 919	16.5	360 982	181 458	21 605
1986/87	704 510	15.7	419 179	223 827	27 958
1987/88	783 966	15.1	435 495	236 498	30 780
1988/89	1 066 837	16.8	550 518	309 620	30 776

Coombs (1968) also observed the economic challenges which faced developing countries trying to transform their education and social systems. But, he also pointed out that there are other important constraints besides money which can limit the speed at which an educational system can expand, change and improve. He said:

> It [money] provides the essential purchasing power with which education acquires its human and physical inputs. With too little money, education can be helpless. With a sufficient supply its problems become more manageable even though they do not vanish (p.45).

According to Assie-Lumumba (1995:334) who apparently agrees with Coombs (1968), "human, financial or physical resources are supposed to offer a better learning support environment" for schools so that inadequate human, financial and material resources will not result in poor quality education. In this case the resources allocated to schools are considered a proxy measure for school quality so that the quality of education tends to improve where more resources are allocated, and quality declines with diminishing resource allocation.

In EWP's case, therefore, the involvement of those being educated and their educators in productive work is seen as a way of generating income from the commercial and productive activities of the school. The school in this case is seen as having the potential of being self-reliant and substituting for parts of government subsidies. Government would in such a case be able to expand education through a reduction of unit costs.

At the political level, post-colonial nations in seeking EWP were looking for an education system which would provide relevant knowledge, attitudes and values in line with their local development needs. While the inherited abstract western-type education was taking the young out of the work force, productive education programs were designed to reverse this tendency and integrate the student directly with the economic reality of

his/her community and country.

Pedagogical Objectives

EWP seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice, to integrate mental and physical work as a means of educating. EWP are programs which combine a general education with productive work to form an integrated curriculum in which the students learn by participating in the school's productive and commercial activities.

As Adiseshan (1979) has pointed out, EWP, as a pedagogy which calls for educationally productive work is at its best not repetitive, it is creative and it produces socially useful and marketable goods and services. According to Adiseshan:

> The decisive characteristics of educationally productive work are the learning processes involving; a) the formation of new ideas or new combinations of existing ideas; b) purposeful activity leading from one overriding purpose to another; and c) socialization of the ideas and purposes (p.60).

Such a pedagogy as mentioned above is credited with the production of qualities of character such as perseverance, accuracy, self-reliance, entrepreneurship, cooperation and creativity. It also would encourage an appreciation of manual work and aid in counteracting elitist tendencies. But regardless of all it offers, EWP has been resisted in many of the societies where it has been introduced. Von Borstel (1991:39) blames everyone from intellectuals to the poorest for contributing to its failure:

> Intellectuals do not like it because it asks them to put down their books for a while and pick up a tool. Middle class parents do not like it because it expects their children to engage in manual activities commonly associated with the lower classes. Poor parents do not like it because to them education is a means for their children to join the ranks of the government maintained paper pushers.

E. Independence and Opposition to Colonialism

The newly independent African governments of the 1960s and those of today often

inherit education systems which are largely irrelevant to the lives of the African people in both content and emphasis. The content is often useless and unrelated to the life experiences of the children. Foster (1965) has called such curricula 'ossified and irrelevant'. Such curricula are still found in most developing countries.

Most post-independent educational and development reforms in Africa and other Third World countries have been caught up in the struggles between existing colonial systems and desired new strategies. In the case of Zimbabwe there also exists internal struggles between the national educational reformers for development and the compradore elites of colonialism, most of whom are still in positions of authority. Such an elite is often more conservative than its former colonial masters (Freire, 1993; wa Thiongo, 1986; Carnoy, 1980 and Memmi, 1965).

Cooperative efforts to change their colonial inheritance are found in the coming together of former colonies to formulate alternatives to their development strategies. Such a coming together was witnessed in the 1961 Conference of African Ministers of Education in Addis Ababa. This conference was for the purposes of discussing the issues of educational relevance in post independent Africa. It was at this conference that productive education was recommended as "a way of redeeming relevancy to African education" (Foster, 1965). The adopted recommendations also called for more emphasis to be put on agriculture because most African countries, including Zimbabwe, have at least 65% of their population depending on agriculture for their employment, income and subsistence. It would be suicidal to neglect the development of agriculture and emphasis on agricultural education, argued the participants at the Addis Ababa conference (Foster, 1965).

International trends have also influenced the choice of productive education in most Third World countries. Trends like the Human Capital theory of the 1960s and its claim that there was a direct link between education and increased production output. In response to this Human Capital assumption, most newly independent African Countries made

massive expansion of primary and secondary education.

These international trends changed in the early 1970s. The Human Capital theory had failed to produce the expected results of increasing production output. Most developing countries had expanded education and were now being faced with huge numbers of school graduates who could not get jobs because the economy had not expanded correspondingly. Instead, poverty had increased (Carnoy, 1980).

It was in response to this increased poverty of the masses of developing nations that Robert MacNamara, the then president of the World Bank, declared in 1972, that the poverty of the Third World could be solved by intensifying non-formal education, vocational education, and rural development. This declaration by the World Bank meant that foreign aid and loans for the developing countries for such endeavours were made available for these specific educational areas (Carnoy, 1980). Again like most other Third World countries, most of post-colonial Africa had to follow this economic trend for their economical survival.

Post-colonial Education Reform Possibilities in Africa

Post-colonial critics, as mentioned earlier, have also been providing a rallying point for exposing the poverty and violence of modernity and arguing for alternative development strategies. One of their most pressing argument for change has been observed by Toh (1987:60), when he said:

> After nearly four 'development decades', despite billions spent by governments and aid organizations, the continuing and often worsening plight of so many Third World citizens has raised serious questions about the validity of mainstream strategies. Modernization actively pursued by most South ruling elites, supported by the North governments and economic agencies, and legitimized by the myriad of experts or consultants in the development supermarket, has by and large generated more problems than it has solved.

In Africa, most post-colonial criticism is found in literature and literary criticism.

Prominent African writers including Ngugi wa Thiongo, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka have maintained in their writings the dignity of the African wisdom tradition, its culture, philosophy, and other treasures carried by African languages and tradition. These writers have also written about the contact point of African and Western traditions and all that happened to Africa because of that 'contact'. In writing about the point of contact, African writers have attempted to explain Africa to the world, that Africa had a past and a culture of dignity and human complexity. Appiah (1992:171), for instance, reminds us of the "surprising persistence of these 'pre-modern' affiliations, the cultural and political fretwork of relations through which our very identity is conferred".

Other post-colonial critics like Spivak (1990) and Nandy (1987, 1983) are, to the contrary, critiquing this argument of African heritage, saying that it is impossible to completely go back to the old state of things and that to think so "just leads to nostalgia, antiquarianism and what some scholars call 'the myth of pre-contactism'", Smith (1992, personal correspondence). So the challenge of appealing to an earlier wisdom tradition will, in this study, be taken up creatively in a hermeneutic sense, which is to read it with a kind of vigour against the dominance of western development models.

A convincing argument to this African wisdom tradition versus modernity has been put forward by Appiah (1992), who argues that if you postulate an either-or choice between Africa and the West, there is no place for you in the 'real world'. We are all already contaminated by each other. Appiah calls for what he terms a "circulation of cultures". Similar sentiments have been echoed by Said (1993:282) when he explains that imperialism did not end or become 'past' with decolonization, "...a legacy of connections still binds countries with their colonial master countries...". Barratt-Brown quoted in Said (1993:282) voiced the same concern when he writes:

> Imperialism is without question a most powerful force in the economic, political and military relations by which the less economically developed lands are subjected

to the more economically developed. We may still look forward to its ending.

And according to Magdoff (1969:68), by the time the colonized people became independent, the main purpose of colonialism had been achieved in that "The colonies had become intertwined with the world capitalist markets; their resources, economies, and societies had become adapted to the needs of the metropolitan centres".

This connectedness was sealed with the imposition of the colonizers' language at the expense of the local languages. In the case of Zimbabwe, the choice of English as the official language was made by the colonizers and not the colonized who were forced to speak a language for which they had no say about its imposition. English as the dominant language became a tool for social and cultural domination of the majority blacks who were assimilated into the minority, but dominant, language and culture of the colonizers (Nhundu, 1987).

Post-colonial Critics on Foreign Languages

African and other post-colonial critics from developing countries have argued that there is need to re-look at the foreign languages inherited from colonialism by African and other formerly colonized people. Wa Thiongo (1986) has suggested that there is need for allowing a critical use of the language [foreign] to permit a 'decolonizing' of the mind and a 'return to an African Africa'. On the other hand, Conrad quoted in Said (1993:281) sees independence of language differently. He groups language with possessions when he says that:

> The railways, ships, hospitals, factories, and schools will be ours and we'll speak their language without either a sense of guilt or a sense of gratitude. Once again we shall be as we were - ordinary people - and if we are lies we shall be lies of our own making.

In terms of the foreign language, Conrad failed to observe that the English language

which post-independent countries inherited from colonialism was a colonizing language and was forced upon the colonized. While it is necessary to mention that the colonial languages opened the Third World to the outside world plus many other positive aspects, it is also necessary to analyze its negative values. In Zimbabwe, for an example, the adoption of English as the only formal language as well as that of instruction, made local languages to suffer. They were literally 'frozen' during colonialism, together with their accompanying cultures.

The English language used by colonizers in Zimbabwe had words like 'yes master', 'boy', (meaning any male servant who were mostly old men), 'Baas/boss' (as a way of answering to any white person, including children, when they called a black person). The word 'black' was and still is used in many negative ways, while 'white' still stands for the positive. The English language also came with many aspects of its culture which were at times at loggerheads with the African culture. One example is that of addressing older people by their first names. This is something not acceptable in the African culture. The problem now comes when Africans go into restaurants, the waiters have name tags with their first names. This was not a problem during white rule because no black person, except staff, was allowed into restaurants. But with desegregation it becomes difficult for a younger black person to ask for service calling the older waiter by their first names. What makes this worse is that many of the hotels, bars and restaurants are still owned by whites whose culture uses first names and, therefore, want their staff to have first name tags too.

The British language and culture brought by colonization to Zimbabwe were also sexist. For example, the Shona language has neither pronouns he, she, hers, his nor did it have a generalized noun like 'man' standing for humans. Everybody has the same pronouns 'wa, ya, ye, dza, dze' etc. The only variation is when it comes to elders. Honorific plurals are used, like 'dzenyu, wenyu' etc.

Zimbabwe's two cultural tribes and languages (Shona and Ndebele) also had much

respect for women who were respected for their individual achievements just as it did to men. A case in point was the woman who led the first uprising against British Settlers - the Chimurenga war of 1896-7. This lady, Mbuya Nehanda (Mbuya meaning grandmother) united all tribal and ethnic groups which included the warring Shonas and Ndebeles, to fight together against white settlement of Zimbabwe. The first thing that the colonial government did when they caught her was to humiliate her and hanged her in public. From then on women in Zimbabwe were to occupy a 'woman's space' in European ways. This sexist position of the woman was also reflected in the school culture. The point being made here is that the colonial language was and is a language of oppression. In Zimbabwe, the foreign language and culture made the life of the white people easy while creating problems for the Africans.

By independence none of the local African languages could be made national because they lacked scientific and technological development. English was still to be the formal language, but this time not alone. The two local languages were also made formal and were to be used in instruction together with English so that they would help students understand the learning content better, especially in the lower grades where children would be coming from non English backgrounds.

The Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), was given the task of promoting African languages in the school curriculum, "...so that in due course, African languages can encompass not only the traditional topics, but also science and technology" (CDU Plan, 1986-1990:1). African languages were also to be used as:

> Vehicles of the cultural, social and human values of the nation; and to build on the cultural inheritance of the past a cultural expression suited to the real experiences and real aspiration of the masses ... In these innovations, stress is placed on setting the education system in its proper cultural environment. It is abundantly recognized that proper education cannot take place in a vacuum. Moreover cultural identity is essential for political independence (Zimbabwe, 1982:22).

While Conrad (in Said, 1993:281), believed in the use of the colonizing language 'without a sense of guilt or a sense of gratitude', African post-colonial critics call for an analysis of the foreign language and as wa Thiongo has called it a return to an 'African Africa'. He criticises African writers' use of a foreign language to tell about the neglected Africanness. Wa Thiongo (1993:20) accuses the African writers of trying to "forge an identity by borrowing very heavily from African languages, that is from the rich harvest of orature as developed by African languages over the years... He gives nothing, absolutely nothing, back to his language".

The solution, according to wa Thiongo (1993), is for the African languages to borrow from one another; from their classical heritages and from the world. Instead of being appropriated by the world, the new African writing in African languages "will appropriate the world and one hopes on terms of equal exchange, at the very least, borrow in its own terms and needs" (p.23). Such are the challenges presented to language use in education for development approaches like EWP in Zimbabwe.

In terms of national development policies, post-colonial critics are asking for an equitable power-sharing position whereby developing countries are given a more equitable share of power and decision-making within the monetary and financial institutions (Said, 1993; Mungazi, 1992; Achebe, 1989; Mandaza, 1986; The Brandt Report, 1980 and Chimweizu, 1975). I interpret this as meaning a rejection of the binary system of the West and its dominated cultural 'other' and, as Said (1993) puts it, the unequal relationship between unequal 'interlocutors'.

The Brandt Report quoted in Said (1993:212) takes the binary argument further and recommends that:

> The poorest nations of the Southern hemisphere must have their "priority needs" addressed, hunger must be abolished commodity earnings strengthened, manufacturing centres, trans-national corporations should be "restricted" in their practices, the global monetary system should be reformed, development finance

> should be changed to eliminate what has been accurately described as the "debt trap".

Said (1993) calls the language of the Brandt Report that of crisis and emergency. Perhaps Fay's (1987) belief in humanity offers hope rather than the desperate despair of the Brandt Report. Fay believes that the local people or any human beings can affirm some of their inherited traditions, cultivate them, embrace them or combine and recreate them in novel ways. It is such hope in themselves which should make local people believe that if they work hard enough they can revise visions of the past and move towards a post-colonial future, as urgently "reinterpretable and redeployable experiences, in which the formerly silent native speaks and acts on territory reclaimed as a general movement of resistance, from the colonist" (Said, 1993:212).

Having identified this colonial 'connectedness' posed by colonialism and colonial languages, what to do about it becomes a crucial question. This requires a post-colonial critique which analyzes issues of education and development to expose the present and explore alternatives and possibilities in matters of education and development. Post-colonial critics from Africa as well as from the West interrogate what plagues post-colonial nations, how it came to be, as well as possibilities for changing it. What is left is to explore more of these possibilities within different specific environments.

The first task for developing nations, according to post-colonial critics, is to challenge colonial and neo-colonial Eurocentric 'meta narratives' (Lyotard, 1984) and establish their own narratives. Akatas (1977:59), writing about the 1843 Spanish colony of the Philippines, provides an example of how colonialism and colonial narratives influenced a people's outlook:

> The native [Filipino] was talked about, analyzed, abused and overworked, fed with bad food and opium, separated from his or her environment, covered with discourse whose purpose was to keep him industrious and subordinate...[Thus], gambling, opium, inhuman labour conditions and forced labour were all in one way

> or another woven into the fabric of colonial ideology and given an aura of respectability...

Wa Thiongo (1993) writes about the need to change this identity given to the 'natives' by the colonial masters. He analyses the role that western literature played in naming the colonized peoples. For example, in Tempest, Shakespeare names the 'native' as the savage and rapist who is lazy, a lover of whisky, stupid and cannibalistic, while Defoe's Robinson Crusoe portrays the native Friday as a man with neither an identity nor a language. Wa Thiongo (1993:16), graphically illustrates the characterization of natives when Crusoe says:

> In a little time I began to speak to him and teach him to speak to me; and first I made him know that his name was Friday which was the day I saved his life ... I likewise taught him to say Master, and then let him know that was to be my name ... I was greatly pleased with him and made it my business to teach him everything that was proper to make him useful, handy and helpful ....

Wa Thiongo (1993) retorts by calling for the right of the Third World peoples to name the world for themselves. He commends the African literature of the 60s for depicting the African people's struggle to claim their own space. He calls it the political struggle of people of Asia, Africa and South America to move the centre of the universe from Europe to their centres.

The first task of wa Thiongo's 'moving the centre' is, according to Fanon (1967), the reversal of the accepted paradigm which argues that Europe gave the colonies their modernity. The reversal principle, on the contrary, argues that not only was the well being and progress of Europe built up with sweat of dead bodies of Negroes, Arabs, Indians and the yellow race, but Europe was literally the creation of the Third World.

In Zimbabwe the awareness to be able to reverse colonial 'meta narratives' happened during the nationalism years of the 1950s which, in turn, helped fuel the resistance war of 1967-1980. The nationalists in Zimbabwe, like those of the rest of

colonial Africa, did not like, among other things, the fact that Europe had the power to narrate, not only their own history but to create narratives of Africa's past, present, and future. The Europeans also blocked African narratives from forming or from emerging (Achebe, 1989; Said, 1989; Mudimbe, 1988; wa Thiongo, 1986; Zimbabwe, 1982; Soyinka, 1976; Chimweizu, 1975 and Rodney, 1961).

It took a lot of mobilization and sacrifices by nationalist and resistance movements in Zimbabwe to bring up counter narratives of emancipation and enlightenment which in turn gave the young Zimbabweans the courage to rise and fight for independence. During the resistance mobilization, politicians for the new Zimbabwe argued that once independence was gained new and imaginative conceptions of society and culture were required in order to avoid what Said (1993) calls 'orthodoxies and injustices' of colonialism. The first task of this culture of resistance was to reclaim, rename, and re-inhabit the Zimbabwean land. All this was accomplished successfully by 1980. The post-independence phase was to be geared towards the search for authenticity, for more congenial national origin than that provided by colonial history - a 'decolonized identity' as wa Thiongo (1986) called it.

Said (1993) has also written about the first nationalists' achievement of colonized lands, that of challenging Eurocentric grand narratives. He claims that for the first time Westerners were required to confront themselves not only as the 'Raj' but as representatives of a culture and even races accused of crimes of violence, crimes of suppression, apartheid, as well as crimes of conscience:

> Westerners became aware that what they have to say about history and cultures of "subordinate" people was challengeable by the people themselves, people who few years back were simply incorporated, culture, land, history, and all, into the Great Western Empires, and their disciplinary discourses. (This is not to denigrate the accomplishments of many scholars, historians, artists, philosophers, musicians, and missionaries, whose corporate and individual efforts in making known the World beyond Europe are a stunning achievement) (Said, 1993:195).

Franz Fanon (1961) called it the task of re-introducing human kind into the world, the whole of human kind, both Europeans and the formally colonized. A reanimating and redirecting of an inert mass of silent 'natives' into a new inclusive conception of history. This collective task, says Fanon, will be achieved when the "...European peoples must first decide to wake up and shake themselves, use their brains, and stop playing the stupid faun of the Sleeping Beauty" (Fanon, 1961:106).

Reclaiming Relevance to Zimbabwean Education

What can be done in the case of Zimbabwe and other developing countries where those playing the 'faun of the Sleeping Beauty' in issues of education and development are now local elites and their sponsors? This is where the question of national identity comes in. The 'bourgeois African', said Said (1993), has to decide, unselfishly, what identity is appropriate for their post-independent nations and to ask themselves what kind of educational system is expected in support of this economic, political as well as cultural identity.

In 1980 the new government of Zimbabwe apparently had the opportunity of choosing an identity for this newly independent country. This was the opportunity for change as well as redressing the 'orthodoxies and injustices' of colonialism. Mugabe's government chose a socialist path to development. Mugabe (1986:8) speaks to this choice when he said:

> We seek to build a socialist society in Zimbabwe. For us socialism means a self-reliant, egalitarian society founded on the humanitarian values of our own traditions infused with, and enriched by, the progressive thought of modern scientific socialism. Our schools, our entire educational system, must inculcate a socialist consciousness among our young people... Our schools must not merely teach such commitment, they must themselves practise it as well.

The Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) of the Ministry of Education and Culture

was given the task of determining the curriculum within this context of government ideology. With this ideological choice one would have expected a relevant education system to be put into place right away; an education system which would have helped students to participate in the economic growth process and in decision making for production. This did not happen, instead an NGO was created and given more than 10 000 former exile students in ten schools and asked to pilot-test relevant education in the name of EWP. The Ministry of Education declared EWP compulsory for every school but did not put necessary implementation logistical support structure in place. Accordingly, schools were left to interpret and implement this policy without Ministry guidance and support. Some attempted but others did not. This in itself is an indication that Zimbabwe had chosen an ideal identity appropriate to its needs but got 'stuck' at the identification stage. As Said (1993) has cautioned us, identifying an identity is crucial, but just to assert a different identity is never enough. What is needed, according to Fanon quoted by Said (1993:229) is "to go beyond identity and not remain trapped in the emotional self-indulgence of celebrating it".

What Fanon (1967) and Said (1993) have said above is important for Zimbabwe. The political leaders and the 'bourgeois African' had the chance to do something about socialism rather than just talk about it. This lip service to educational changes is not peculiar only to Zimbabwe. Foster (1965:150) observed elsewhere that "...The paradox in Ghanaian education has been the emphasis placed on vocational and agricultural education in all documentary sources and the relative absence of it within the actual system of education".

While there was a lot of talk about socialism after Zimbabwe declared itself socialist in 1980, there was no corresponding evidence to show how society was being changed from capitalism to socialism. In the economic sector, the setting up and encouragement of cooperatives was the closest documented evidence that the Zimbabwean economy was

slowly moving towards socialism, notwithstanding the fact that this change is happening in mostly black economic ventures since the white-owned businesses and multinational corporations are still in control of most of the economic sector.

With a declaration to socialism one would have also expected the change of educational content and materials from the inherited colonial system to that which develops critical understanding of the political and economic changes and to transform work processes and establish new thought habits which decolonize the mind (Nhundu, 1988).

The only other educational move which was in keeping with socialism was EWP which the government committed itself to when it asked ZIMFEP to 'spearhead' its implementation. Ironically, initial government enthusiasm conveyed in numerous official pronouncements and statements (Banana, 1986; Mutumbuka, 1984 and 1986, and Mugabe, 1981 and 1986) did not translate into sustained political and resource support for the pilot project. According to Nhundu and Chivore (1992) who evaluated the ZIMFEP project, the EWP experiment was being marginalized at the national policy planning level partly because ZIMFEP was not getting the necessary political, resource and logistical support needed to succeed. Instead, ZIMFEP was experiencing political and bureaucratic interference which the government had sought to avoid when it set up ZIMFEP as a non-governmental organization (NGO). At that time the then Minister of Education and Culture explained that:

> Because I know that the task would be controversial and that it would meet with opposition that I proposed that an independent welfare organization - ZIMFEP - be set up to lay the ground work for substantive change. I believed that such an organization would have more freedom to experiment and would not be a prisoner of the bureaucratic structure inherited from the colonial past" (Mutumbuka quoted in Gustafsoon 1985:18).

Whether the formation of ZIMFEP eventually facilitated the implementation of EWP, free from bureaucratic constraints as was hoped for by Mutumbuka (1985) and

others, provided a problem area which this study investigated when it engaged selected educators, administrators and policy makers in conversations on issues of education and development in Zimbabwe. The participants also reflected on their experiences in the implementation of EWP and explored the possibilities of EWP in relation to its future role in national development.

Chapter III

RESEARCH ORIENTATION

A. Introduction

The research orientation chosen for this study is hermeneutical interpretation. The process of data collection was informed by Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, particularly his concept of conversation as a mode of hermeneutical inquiry. The radical critical works of Freire and others are employed when interpreting the educational practices of ZIMFEP from the resistance years to the present. Because of its interest in emancipatory dimension, critical theory will be suitable for understanding the educational experiences of the resistance years, especially the work of Freire as it relates to ZIMFEP's early experiences.

When finally putting the findings together, I wish not to narrate them, but to critically seek to understand and interpret them in a way which brings in what Smith (1992, in personal correspondence) has called "human juice" and not just a reportage. This is where a semiotic analysis of the language of the participants becomes useful. Semiotics is used in this study to help expose the signs systems and what lies behind what the hermeneutic conversations of Gadamer would have unearthed.

Hermeneutic conversations and a semiotics interpretation of these conversations combine together well in this study because of its nature. It is a study concerned with the understanding of meaning. The purpose of this study, therefore, becomes that of arriving at knowledge that explicates participants' meanings and understanding of EWP and its relationship to national development in Zimbabwe, as the participants engage in the formulation and implementation of EWP.

Since the search for meaning and interpretation is always problematic and cannot be finally closed off, hermeneutics supported by semiotics (which do not assume an end-point in our act of interpretation and understanding) is explored to develop an orientation for this study. Hence, this chapter begins by looking at how the use of hermeneutic conversation helps in understanding what EWP in Zimbabwe is all about. It goes on to give a brief description of the hermeneutical conversation as a mode of inquiry. The function of hermeneutical reflection in text interpretation and understanding as hermeneutical application is also discussed. Finally, a brief description of semiotic tradition as it relates to the human interpretive act of understanding is also provided in this chapter. For its analytical framework, the study is guided by current theoretical literature on EWP which combines with literature from the field of educational change to inform the implementation process of EWP.

B. Hermeneutical Conversation as a Mode of Inquiry

Hermeneutical conversations are most appropriate as a research orientation because of the nature of this study. The study sought to investigate and understand the meaning of EWP as a curriculum reform for development in Zimbabwe. This is done by entering into conversation with two government policy makers, three educators from ZIMFEP, and several teachers and students involved in the implementation of EWP in one of ZIMFEP's ten pilot schools.

The selection of participants involved in EWP at different levels enabled our conversations to be "voices of participants making sense of a commonly held world" (Carson, 1984:64). We were able to have sustained dialogues because of this common interest. It was hoped that by the end of the study we would have all had an opportunity to re-think our EWP thoughts and actions and by so doing create new shared meaning of how we can re-orientate ourselves in light of the exposed problems and constraints of our EWP

experiences.

I went into the study 'knowing' my research question and allowing myself to be guided by it. The next task was to try and conduct the conversations in ways which would encourage the participants to 'open' up to me and me to them. This openness was essential if participants and myself were to create new meaning from exposing our fore-projections of EWP, in keeping with Smith's (1991) contention that hermeneutics is about creating new meaning and not reporting it.

In order to establish this openness in my study, I had at least four conversations with each of the participants in the study. This, I hoped, was going to enable us to loosen up to each other and understand each other better. Van Manen (1990:99) has also advised on the importance of having a series of conversations, which he contends, "allows reflection on the text (transcript) of previous interviews in order to aim for as much interpretive insight as possible".

It was hoped that when the researcher and participants opened up to each other, they would make their own prejudices/pre-judgements known. Gadamer has pointed out that we all come into a hermeneutical research with our own ideas of *what is* and *how* it is to be done. We cannot disregard our hermeneutical situation with which we bring into our research, otherwise "failure to acknowledge this is a denial of our own history and we become unable to comprehend the situatedness of our own understanding" (Gadamer 1884:352). Therefore, we could not avoid pre-judgements in these conversations because we all make sense of the world from within a particular horizon.

Prejudices as a Precondition for Understanding

Gadamer's argument that prejudices are preconditions for all understanding is one of the most controversial features of his philosophical hermeneutics. Gadamer (1984) stresses that we do not arrive at meaning or valid understanding by leaping out of or

seeking to bracket our own historicity, forestructures, prejudgements and prejudices. Prejudices, instead, function in a positive way in helping understand what is new. In what he terms his apologia for prejudice against the enlightenments' 'prejudice against prejudice', Gadamer (1984:235) explains that:

> It is not so much our judgements as it is our prejudices that constitute our being. This is a provocative formulation, for I am using it to restore to its rightful place as a positive concept of prejudice that was driven out of our linguistic usage by the French and English Enlightenment... Prejudices are not necessarily unjustified and erroneous, so that they erroneously distort the truth. In fact, the historicity of our existence entails prejudices, in the literal sense of the word, constitute the initial directedness of our whole ability to experience. Prejudices are biases of our openness to the world. They are simply the conditions whereby what we encounter says something to us.

Gadamer also argues that our prejudices are situated in tradition which is not static but forward-looking with an anticipatory dimension that opens up further possibilities of our being. This means that we do not seek understanding for the sake of understanding, but that we are always situated between an historically affected consciousness and a wondering about what the future might hold. These wanderings inspired us to seek to understand and then change our situation.

In Truth and Method, Gadamer (1984) distinguishes between blind prejudices which are disabling, unproductive and lead to misunderstanding, and justified prejudices which are enabling and are productive of knowledge. The two kinds of prejudices are constitutive of what we are and are always with us, but by suspending their 'validity' we open ourselves to what is new in a text to speak to us. We are able to discriminate between blind and enabling prejudices. Through this distanciation of our prejudices occurs a fusion of horizons in which there is a dialogic encounter between the text that is present and our historical situation, leading to the enlargement of our own horizons and a deeper self-understanding.

There is possibility in prejudices which are not self-enslaving but are fluid and open

to new situations. Thus, there is no finality in understanding, and there is no absolute knowledge. To understand this way becomes understanding differently. Hence, in this study our pre-judgements provided us with a starting point for our conversations. Through our conversations the researcher and the research partners were able to constantly revise their fore-projections as we created new understanding and meaning from a fusion of our different horizons. This way we were able to provoke and open up the possibility of new meanings of EWP and national development in Zimbabwe. I also used what came out of this 'fusion of horizons' in the interpretation of the literature review of productive education, EWP and the practical experiences of its implementation by ZIMFEP.

C. The Nature of Conversations

Conversation is more like dialogue where there is a genuine interest in both partners to hear the other's voice and a willingness to seek understanding of our subject matter. In real conversations, which are not concerned with winning an argument or defending a position, the twists and turns of dialogue may lead to insights into the subject matter and to unearthing of novel situations unanticipated by the partners. According to Gadamer (1984:331):

> What emerges in its truth is the logos, which is neither mine nor yours and hence so far transcends the subjective opinions of the partners to the dialogue that even the person leading the conversation is always ignorant.

The conversations which took place in this study were guided by Gadamer's idea of a genuine conversation in the sense that the partners did not talk across purposes but allowed themselves to be conducted by the object to which they were directed. Our conversations, thus, became what Carson (1984:66) called a "profusion of examples, ostensive references and vivid recollection".

According to Van Manen (1990:98):

> a conversation has a hermeneutic thrust: it is oriented to sense-making and interpreting of the notion that drives or stimulates the conversation... It aims at producing themes, insights, that the researcher eventually needs to create a text to which the themes, the fruits of the conversational relation, are able to minister.

In this sense it will be as talking together like friends. And that is why, when the participants of the conversation try to out-argue each other, the conversation disintegrates (Van Manen 1990). This is the ideal type of directing conversations which guided my field study.

D. Hermeneutical Reflection on the Conversations

Hermeneutics, in its investigation of phenomena, involves a reflective dimension which clarifies and makes explicit the preunderstandings involved in the process of understanding. The main purpose of hermeneutical reflections then becomes that of broadening and enriching our understanding. According to Gadamer (1976:38):

> Hermeneutic reflection fulfils the function that is accomplished in all bringing of something to a conscious awareness. ...only through hermeneutic reflection am I no longer unfree over against myself but rather can deem freely what in my preunderstanding may be justified and unjustifiable. And in this manner do I learn to gain a new understanding of what I have seen through eyes conditioned by prejudice. But this implies too, that the prejudgements that lead my preunderstanding are constantly at stake, right up to the moment of their surrender.

For Gadamer (1976:13), "The real power of hermeneutical consciousness is our ability to see what is questionable" since only hermeneutical reflection which involves constant self-reflection and questioning of specific preunderstandings leads to self-understanding. Without questioning and self-reflection, self-understanding cannot be hermeneutically achieved. And since the truth of a situation never reveals itself by itself but has to be provoked, hermeneutical self-reflection and questioning then concern themselves with finding ourselves or, curiously, losing ourselves through new meanings and understanding (Smith, 1992).

It was, therefore, part of my task in this study to compile personal reflections on the conversations made with participants and to gain new understanding and meanings of EWP. Throughout the research I kept a journal of my reflections of the new meanings and understanding of EWP which were emerging from our conversations. In keeping with Gadamer's advise on hermeneutical reflection, I also constantly reflected on the new meanings on EWP and its relationship to national development with the hope of finding myself through Ricoeur's (1981) critical distanciation. Finally, my reflective journal kept track of the way in which I could find or lose myself in this study through emerging new meanings and understanding. Therefore, the reflective journal reports on my own personal transformation through the study.

E. Semiotic Interpretation of Meaning

Hermeneutics calls us to be attentive to language used in conversations because we first have to understand the meaning of the language used in order for us to understand hermeneutic conversations. According to Gadamer (1984), language is important to hermeneutic inquiry because through it we reveal the view of the world we hold. This attentiveness to language finds expression through the use of semiotic analysis of the participants' voices while engaged in hermeneutic conversations.

Language is defined by Barthes (1964) as a system of signs that expresses ideas. To understand the ideas expressed through language we need to employ the analytical tools of semiology, the study of language. Semiology helps us enter into the personal voices of participants as well as gain insights of their unvoiced voices (Halliday, 1978). It also allows us to assume a critical voice while not destroying or devaluing the struggles of participants. Critical voice, according to Britzman (1991), "attempts the delicate and discursive work of re-articulating the tensions between and within words and practices, or constraints and possibilities, as it questions the consequences of the taken-for-granted."

Semiology helps us to do all the analyses mentioned above through our attentiveness to the semiotic triangle which is made up of the sign, the signified and the signifier. Specific attention was given to signs signifying Zimbabwe's caughtedness to colonialism, neo-colonialism, oppression and modernization. Such a methodological interpretation is intended to help us extract the 'unspoken' from what is spoken, and what is meant from the said (Halliday, 1978).

The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology (1984:218) advises that the starting point of semiotics is the distinction between the signifier, the signified and the sign. This approach is supported by Saussurian terminology which suggests that the signified and the signifier are the components of the signs, such that the sign is a union of a signifier and the signified (Bilash 1984).

The signifier can be a physical object, a word, a thought, a concept, a picture, an attitude, a belief or an emotion in one's head. The signified is a mental concept indicated by the signifier. The sign is the association of signifier and the signified. An example given in the Dictionary of Sociology is that of a Valentine card (signifier) which can signify adoration (signified). Both the card and adoration can exist separately, perhaps with other signifiers or signifieds, but their association constitutes a specific sign. As in the Valentine card, there are different layers of meaning of signs as reported by Barthes (1967).

At one level a sign may form myths as it stands for a whole range of cultural values. At another level signs are related to metaphors. Another example of how myths and metaphors function in society is that of a photograph of a baby which can indicate the signified (the baby), relatively straight forwardly. At another level, the same photograph may also signify the innocence of childhood or sanctity of family life (The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology 1984). With the aid of semiotic analyses, words, phrases, or sentences portraying limiting situations, myths and metaphors from participants for this study are presented and interpreted.

F. Conducting the Study

The voices of participants presented in this chapter emerged from a synthesis of three and sometimes four conversations held in Zimbabwe with each participant between the months of June and August of 1993. The conversations were about curriculum changes for development in Zimbabwe. The participants were selected to capture a wide cross-section of experiences and perceptions on EWP ranging from classroom teachers to the most senior education policy maker. These included one minister involved in education, one chief curriculum development officer in the Ministry of Education, three educators from the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP), one headmaster of an Education with Production (EWP) school and five teachers from the same school. The real names of the participants and the name of the school visited have been concealed to protect their identity and ensure anonymity. Instead only pseudonyms are used in this study.

I was guided by Gadamer's hermeneutics in my orientation because I sought to investigate and understand the meanings given by participants to Education with Production (EWP) as curriculum reform for development in Zimbabwe. In a hermeneutical inquiry of this nature the concern is to provoke the disclosure of participants' meanings. As Smith (1991:189) argues, such a discourse can be achieved in hermeneutic imagination which:

> works from a commitment to generativity and rejuvenation and to the question of how we can go on together in the midst of constraints and difficulties that constantly threaten to foreclose on the future.

From these conversations fundamental questions regarding the relationship between development and schooling emerged. These questions include: What is the suitable kind of national development for Zimbabwe? What role does education play in this kind of national development strategy? What role is Education with Production expected to play? What impact has Education with Production made since the inception of the Zimbabwe

Foundation for Education with Production? Why are things going the way they are going? What possibilities does EWP have as an alternative education model for an alternative development model?

As we sought to provide answers to these and many other questions raised during the study we hoped to come to deeper understandings of our commonly held world and of the relationship between education and development. To do this, all subsequent conversations with participants were systematically built on previous ones. Themes which had emerged during the last conversation were analyzed and summarized and then given to the participant in order to provide the participants the chance to reflect on their previous thoughts and my interpretation of them.

Such reflections enabled us to question our meanings further in accordance with Gadamer's (1984) thesis that a true hermeneutical conversation should provide continuous questioning of our meanings. This form of discourse in search of meaning locates itself within the hermeneutical framework of investigation which sees the process of thinking as comprising three major phases of (a) initiating conversation, (b) continuing the conversation, and (c) reflecting on the conversations. This approach is further supported by Merleau-Ponty (1964) who argues that the unreflected only comes into existence for us through reflection.

G. The Context of the Study

The study was conducted within an environment where the concept of Education with Production (EWP) was being thought out as well as being tried out. The thought out stage was being undertaken at two levels: a) Ministry of Education (MOE), and b) the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP). The Ministry of Education was responsible for mapping out the policy framework within which EWP was identified as the ideal national education system to be adopted nationally following field

trials. ZIMFEP, on the other hand, had the task of experimenting with EWP in ten pilot schools under Ministry of Education mandate.

Thus, while the MOE was responsible for policy formulation, ZIMFEP was concerned with translating policy into practice through its experiments in ten pilot schools. My role as a researcher was to find out, first of all, if EWP was being perceived the same way or not at these two complimentary levels. I also collected as much data as possible to establish how each level viewed EWP in regards to national development.

This study was also carried out within the context of the implementary realities of one of the ten pilot schools. My role at this school was that of a critical participant and researcher. I would sit in and observe each of the five voluntary teachers teach. I was interested in finding out how far the teaching methods used by the teachers promoted the implementation of EWP, especially in the area of linking theory with practice and education and national development needs. At the end of each lesson I provided critical feedback in conversations with the teachers and allowed them to reflect on their teaching and teaching activities.

I chose hermeneutics to guide this investigation because it afforded me the opportunity of critically distancing myself from the practice of EWP with which I had been involved for many years. In accordance with hermeneutics, I was able to reflect on my understandings together with those of the participants who shared the same world as myself. Thus, realizing as Smith (1991:192) did that "... the world is always a world I share with others with whom I communicate, so my descriptions of the world are always subject to modification on the basis of what I share communicatively", I sought to engage in a hermeneutic communication with those who shared the world of EWP with me. Such a sharing of ideas has the hope of improved practice, which is a major concern of hermeneutic inquiry.

H. Validity in the Study

The findings presented in this study transcend any privileged externalized form of validity, for they are derived from participants' stock of knowledge and experience with EWP and issues of education and development. Secondly, in a hermeneutic study where conversations are the mode of research, as in the current study, validity does not go beyond the participants who are, accordingly, considered as co-researchers. In this study participants are seen as co-researchers since we were all interested in the improvement of educational practices in EWP schools. In a research of this kind where participants are treated as co-researchers, Gadamer (1984:331) argues that:

> What emerges in its truth is the logos, which is neither mine nor yours and hence so far transcends the subjective opinions of the partners to the dialogue that even the person leading the conversation is always ignorant.

Thus, the test of validity of the research findings remains valid in terms of the participants and what they said. Through hermeneutics we come to understand that as researchers and educators interested in creating alternatives to education and development, we all become participants.

Thirdly, the conversations were not only recorded live on tape, but are herein quoted to give authority to both the fact that I was out there in the field and also to verify that someone said exactly what was documented. But in order to validate that I had transcribed these conversations correctly, I gave one of the tapes to a fellow student for independent transcription. On comparing his transcription with mine, we found that the two transcriptions matched.

The last level of validity which guided the research is the dialectical principle of seeing of self in situation. According to Ricoeur (1981), this is achieved by returning to the texts themselves and involving the dialectic process of distanciation and participation. In this study distanciation occurred when, as the interpreter, I suspended my pre-

understandings of EWP from my personal experiences in the camp schools in exile and in my work in ZIMFEP. Through this distanciation I allowed the sayings of the texts of conversations to emerge and speak something new to me. My participation was then informed by new insights which were emerging from the texts.

Chapter 1V

RE-PRESENTING THE VOICES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

We shall not cease from exploration, And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time
-T.S. Eliot-

Only when we are clear about the kind of society we are trying to build can we design our educational system to serve our goals.
-Julius Nyerere-

A. Introduction

This chapter attempts to re-present the participants' voices on EWP and national development through themes which came out from hermeneutic conversations and critical reflection used in data collection. This re-presenting of what was said during the conversations is done while trying to remain true to participants' voices, thereby maintaining the purity of what participants expressed in respect of EWP and issues on education and national development. I also make this re-presentation with a realization that the decision on the choice of what to use and not to use from the transcribed conversations is arbitrary and my responsibility. The meaning of what I re-present comes from what the conversations said to me. I therefore analyze them from the meaning which I got from them as a hermeneutic inquirer.

The voice of each participant is presented according to his/her position on that particular theme together with the researcher's interpretation of issues coming out from their language. Semiotics is used to interpret the research conversations because of its call to be attentive to language for better understanding. A brief overview of the conversation

which raised each theme is given at the beginning of each theme's presentation. Also provided is a brief background of each participant so that the reader may understand where the participants are coming from.

B. Minister Farai

Minister Farai has been a Minister in the government of Zimbabwe since independence in 1980. She has served in different ministries but almost all of them have had something to do with education. Minister Farai was chosen for this study because of her long involvement in issues of Education with Production (EWP). I had three conversation meetings with her. The first meeting was a short one where I informed her about my research interests. It was also during this meeting that she helped me identify the person who was most suitable for my study from the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) of the Ministry of Education.

I had personally known Minister Farai since the days of the war for the liberation of Zimbabwe where we both worked in the Research Unit of the Education Department of ZANU, one of the Zimbabwean political parties in exile. This relationship had afforded me the chance to know her ideas about education.

Minister Farai talked of her ideas about what development should mean for Zimbabwe. She also made a critique of the national development plans and how they have been implemented by government. The following themes emerged from our three conversations:

1. The Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) and the subsequent interpretation of development in Zimbabwe,
2. The role of education in development issues and curriculum change efforts in the 'mainstream' education system,
3. The political blocks to meaningful change, and

4. An understanding of EWP and its possibilities.

Theme One : ESAP and the Interpretation of Development in Zimbabwe

From the very beginning Minister Farai made it clear that she was not very happy with the way that development plans and their implementation were being handled in Zimbabwe. The following typifies our conversation on ESAP.

> **Farai**. One problem I find with our national development plans is that they look like wish lists, like when you are a kid you write to Father Christmas and say I wish for that, I wish for that and I wish for that. To some extent our development plans are like that. They are lists of things we would wish to do. But, they don't work out the machinery through which these things will be achieved. I think this has to be made right from the very beginning... We have aspirations but you also have to have very definite ways in which you expect to achieve your goals.

> **Researcher**. Is this lack of realism only to do with the most recent national development plans of 1991 - 1995 which are meant to go along with the World Bank instituted Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP)?

> **Farai**. This is true even for the first national development plans. A simple example is when they said that we want to achieve 8% growth in the economy every year for the next two years. Given our climatic condition, almost three years out of every five we have drought. So we can't have an even rate of growth when our economy is based on agriculture. There is lack of realism in such plans.

> **Researcher**. What changes have been brought by the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) which the government has been following since 1991?

> **Farai**. ESAP has even weakened our conceptualization of what we want even more. We have become too much influenced by the World Bank and IMF thinking and not enough is based on an analysis of our own situation.

Farai was also not happy with the idea of 'equal' competition for all business ventures brought about by ESAP. According to Farai, this and the general difficulties of the economy were destroying emerging businesses which were mostly for blacks. At the time of independence in 1980 all the industrial sector was owned by whites because of the

realities of colonialism. By 1990 still very little was owned by blacks. ESAP is now making these new businesses compete, not only with the established white-owned businesses, but also with the new foreign-owned companies being attracted by ESAP.

Farai uses the word 'realism' to describe what Zimbabwe's development plans lack. Etymologically the word 'real' stands for belonging to the thing itself. Thus a semiotic analysis of Farai's language shows that she does not believe that Zimbabwe's national development plans belong to Zimbabwe and, for this reason, cannot be relevant to its development. Similarly, the way Farai metaphorically describes Zimbabwe's development plans as a kid's wish list for Santa Claus suggests that the development plans are made externally by the World Bank and IMF and assembled in Zimbabwe rather than being made in Zimbabwe to reflect Zimbabwe's 'realism'. At the same time, comparing development plans with a kid's wish list for Santa Claus may suggest the plans inherently lack realism akin to that found in many children's wish lists to Santa Claus. This would further suggest that the plans fail to distinguish the possible from the Utopian.

Farai laments this set up as a most unfortunate development for Zimbabwe especially because of the way the World Bank- and IMF-engineered development plans are unresponsive to the needs of budding black entrepreneurs who are struggling to establish themselves in an economy dominated by whites and multinational companies.

> **Farai**. If you say a company like that must compete with the budding indigenous one, at which age do they compete? You may be comparing a young teenage industry with a very well established industry. Unless you nurture the young industry, its not competitive. Once you say a company must not be protected you don't take into consideration the level of development of that company. It may be true that at a certain stage they will be equally competitive, but it may also be true that they will be killed by ESAP.
>
> It's a bit like your children. If you give them no guidance and say they have to compete then they go to the dogs. And on the other hand if you control them too much and they are forever dependent on you then they are totally useless. In a way this also happens in business and education. One has to look at the age and level of development.

Theme Two: The Role of Education in Development Issues and Curriculum Change Efforts in the 'Mainstream' Education System

In her critique of the way that issues of development are handled in Zimbabwe, Minister Farai was still of the opinion that all was not yet lost in Zimbabwe. According to her, "Our salvation is our education and manpower development plan". This plan, as I gathered, gives priority to skills training in education which is supposed to produce skilled manpower as opposed to the colonial education which emphasized, in the black education system, the production of manual tools for the colonial economy (Nhundu, 1992; Banana,1986 and Riddell, 1980). Minister Farai said that soon after independence:

> Education was envisaged from the very beginning as the central part of government national development strategy. This is why education has been getting such a big share of the government budget. That part of it is very clear.

Minister Farai had, in our previous conversation mentioned that government plans, including its education plans, were not done in a realistic manner. She had mentioned that the planning did not consider the actual implementation. This had resulted in planning becoming an academic exercise while the implementers were doing something totally different. I, therefore, asked her to give me examples in education about what she was talking about.

The examples which she gave were linked to the curriculum change efforts which the Ministry of Education has been involved in. In her own words she explained that:

> At independence in 1980 we were very clear that we should change the curriculum. We started off by making all syllabuses more nationalistic and move away from colonial ideas. The next thing we did was to give the primary education syllabi a heavy emphasis on science and technology. The problem is that it is easy to change the curriculum on paper but it is not so easy to change what goes on in the classroom.
>
> The English syllabus, for example, is a marvellous document but what happens in the classroom may be haphazard. It seems the teachers don't understand what the syllabus is demanding so they will be depending on text books and if the text books are of very limited range, then the children will not do well.

The other example which Farai gave was of the science curriculum. According to the National Education Development Plan, science has to be given more emphasis and more time in primary schools. But what Farai found during her PhD research in 1990 was that instead of teaching science for two and a half hours a week, as the curriculum says, teachers were spending one hour a week and, for the most part, repeating the same things which they had done before. On the science syllabus Farai observed that:

> While on paper we have this wonderful science syllabus, most of the teachers are not able to teach it. Thus in theory we have a key role of education in development, and in theory we have excellent syllabuses, but in practice we have a very uneven quality of education.
>
> **Researcher**. How effectively are teachers being prepared to change the inherited colonial education? How are individual headmasters helping their teachers to change with changing times?
>
> **Farai**. We have two types of headmasters, the old Standard Six guys who can hardly speak any English. These know no science and are really Standard Six. But on the positive side those school heads are much closer to the community and are more able to lead and organize the community. On the negative side their levels of maths, English, science and social studies is very low and obviously you cannot help others to be at a level higher than you.
>
> If you remove all those old fellows you will have young and inexperienced people who are alienated from the community, who are not able to lead the community, who may be academically better but in terms of building up the community they may be at zero. So, that's the other extreme, you have very bright young people who are not able to do this other aspect of education. These are our growing pains. In a way we will out grow it like most teenagers will out grow teenage problems. We will outgrow it because the old guys' average age is now 60, and in five or so years they will be gone anyway. The young guys who graduated after independence will, by that time, be having 10-15 years of experience and will be more mature and ready to take over.

Farai makes extensive use of the metaphor of child growth when she uses words and phrases like "teenage industry", "teenagers" and "teenagers will outgrow teenage problems". This shows her hope for Zimbabwe to mature economically so that the country will be independent of external influence when formulating its development and education

plans. But a semiotic analysis suggests that there could be, however, a dark side to what the signifier "teenage" signifies, that of a child nation waiting to be developed by a mature modern nation, just like children want parental guidance.

Theme Three : The Political Blocks to Meaningful Educational Change

We talked a lot about the examination system and how it affected the efforts to change the education system in Zimbabwe. I asked Farai if the Ministry of Education had tried to break away from this disabling position in which the change process gets cornered because of the examinations system. Her answer shows that they had tried but lacked determination, the kind of commitment which the government also needs if it is to change the whole social fabric. Farai explained that:

> In 1982, 1985 and 1991 the Ministry of Education's Review Committee tried to pass a policy through cabinet to say that we don't have to have 'O' Level examinations but we could not get it passed. They said no, every kid must have 'O' Levels. In a cabinet of 24 people only 3 have always supported such changes. The system which we were suggesting to cabinet was like the European system whereby everybody goes up to form 2 (Grade 9) of general education. There would be no differentiation at this level. Everybody does the same subjects like general science, English, maths etc. In Form 3 (Grade 10), like in Sweden, students will have over 10 different streams to choose from which are of different varieties. Some are woodwork, some are academic, some are art, fridge making etc.
>
> In Thailand for example, they have 9 years of compulsory education. From Grade 7 to Grade 9 the education branches into streams like the languages stream, the maths stream, the humanities stream, the science stream, the technical stream and many more. These three years are so practical that the curriculum says that on completion the student can do things like run a twelve acre farm which is equivalent to our peasant farms. The end product, if he/she chooses agriculture, will be a trained peasant. Our peasants have no training, their agriculture is hit and miss.

Farai said that in Zimbabwe we could easily afford 9 years of education for everybody but we cannot afford the 11 years we presently have, particulary with the high 'O' Level failure rate we have. "This is all we are asking the cabinet to consider, 9 years of more or less free education for everybody with the next 2-3 years with differentiation. This

is what 90% of our cabinet is refusing", concluded Farai.

> **Farai**. I think it is also a reflection not only of cabinet but the whole country. In my view you are forcing everybody into a mode that doesn't suit. We should be able to form our own values about what is good education.

> **Researcher**. Yes, we are still following what our colonial masters told us was good for us. The response by cabinet suggests that, as a country, we do not have our own development values which can be passed on through our education system. This is something we seriously need to consider its importance at the same time that educational changes are being thought out.
>
> But are there any budget savings if the 'O' Level system is dropped?

> **Farai**. Oh yes, definitely, every year almost 200 000 kids sit for 'O' Level exams and about 80 000 of these fail everything. If say each kid is costing government $500 a year, then it means for the two 'O' Level years a total of $80 000 000 is wasted. This we have made cabinet aware of. We have told them that if we have 11-12 years of schooling the last 2 or 3 will be specialized and 'O' and 'A' Levels will not be needed. But we can't buy that. We say no, we need to have 'O' Levels or nothing.

Farai's statement above reveals a nation caught up in its colonial inheritance. Likewise the cabinet's refusal to change following expert recommendations on 'O' level examinations may also be signifying their caughtness in colonialism. What Farai is putting across in this conversation is that such examinations have long ceased to serve meaningful purpose in Zimbabwe. They are costing the government and parents a lot of money and yet, unlike the period of limited access, passing them does not guarantee getting employment and a better life. The school system is presently churning into the labour market 100 000 graduates per year who compete for few jobs which the economy currently creates each year. There is no link between the education system and the economic realities.

Theme Four : An Understanding of Education with Production (EWP) and its Possibilities

During our second conversation we talked a lot about EWP. We came to an understanding of what EWP means as opposed to what is being done in most schools in Zimbabwe in the name of EWP.

What came out from this 'brainstorming' conversation was that the theory of Education with Production is to relate economic activities and political infrastructure to intellectual activities. In Europe this theory emerged as a reaction to the 19th Century education which concentrated on abstract knowledge which was divorced from and irrelevant to the problems of society. Education with Production as we know it now is an outcome of modern education theories which suggest that what we do in life, our economic activities for example, are informed by theory, and our theoretical thinking is informed by our actual work.

Farai said that she believes in this theory of Education with Production and this is why she has always supported it in Zimbabwe. While this may be the case, the question which this research sought an answer to was what steps the Ministry of Education had taken to put theory into practice. In response, Farai conceded that not much had been done in this respect:

> **Farai**. As a theory it remains a very important theory but in terms of practice we can say, what did we do? Did we manage to put the idea into a practicable form? But, just like we were discussing earlier on, maybe the curriculum on paper is fine, but when we go into the classroom, is not fine because the teacher cannot relate the practical activities to intellectual activities. This is why EWP is implemented so badly both within ZIMFEP, as well as in the mainstream schools. It is worse in the mainstream schools where teachers still tend to make practical work a punishment.

The above mentioned teachers' problem of not being able to handle theory concurrently with practice was discussed a lot more in the conversations which I held with Jack. Jack was one of the participants from the ZIMFEP directorate.

C. Jack

I first made the ZIMFEP directorate become aware of my intention to study EWP in Zimbabwe and its relationship to development strategies in early 1993 when I was applying for funds to carry out this study. The prospective funding agent had requested a letter from this organization giving its consent and commitment for my research. Thus when I arrived in Zimbabwe I did not have problems because the ZIMFEP directorate had already assigned me possible participants for this study. Jack was the person assigned to me from ZIMFEP's administration department. I had particularly requested someone from administration in order for him/her to provide my study with the link between the Ministry of Education policies on EWP and ZIMFEP's interpretation of them at policy level. Jack turned out to be a good choice because of his long involvement with EWP since before and after independence.

The second and third conversations with Jack were carried out while the conversations with Minister Farai were still going on. This afforded me the chance to take back and seek clarification from Farai, policy issues raised by Jack. The same was done on issues of EWP raised by Minister Farai. They were taken to Jack for further clarification from the point of view of ZIMFEP. This cross referencing of Farai's and Jack's ideas will be reflected in the presentation of Jack's voices whenever necessary.

During our first conversation I asked Jack to comment on Minister Farai's observation that EWP in Zimbabwe was facing implementation problems. In response to this question Jack decided to explain to me what task ZIMFEP was given in 1980 by the first Minister of Education and Culture at independence.

Theme One : The Task of the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP)

Jack told me about the first task that ZIMFEP was given, of developing further the

concept of EWP which had been practised in Zimbabwe's camp schools in exile during the liberation war. It was envisioned that after this piloting stage on ten schools was over, government would then adopt this concept and replace its inherited colonial education system with EWP. Correspondingly alternative national development strategies would be developed which would be in line with or feed into productive education.

> **Jack**. The idea was to start from small and then use the experiences from a small experimental centre and then spread the concept. But unfortunately the government bureaucracy did not do things the way we saw it. Instead of appreciating and supporting all aspects that would make the experiment at the small ZIMFEP centre a success, that support was not given. As a result it took very long to achieve what it was supposed to achieve before it spreads nationally.

To 'spread' is a word that signifies originality. Etymologically, to 'spread' is to 'sprout' and sprout means to 'germinate'. A sprout is also a shoot, a branch of a tree. This is what the policy of EWP was meant to be; to germinate an original idea through ZIMFEP experiments which would then branch out and incrementally or trickle down to cover the whole national education system. According to EWP educators who participated in this study, this sprouting process was not given a chance. This is supported by the findings of an evaluation study of ZIMFEP programs (Nhundu and Chivore, 1993:10) which expressed concern over the apparent lack of government support for EWP. In their view "government should categorically come into the open as to whether they support the concept in its original form or whether they have got new ideas or second thoughts".

> **Researcher**. What do you see as the reasons why the government has not been as supportive as it should have been?

> **Jack**. I think our first problem was that of acceptability. Acceptability was an assumption on our part because we thought that since freedom fighters had been accepted as liberators everything that they would talk about would be equally acceptable. But in education that was not so, in the sense that the bureaucracy that was in the old colonial system remained the same bureaucracy. What had made this bureaucracy what they were was their type of education and they thought they had become experts, meaning that they had received a very good education. Now we

were telling them that their education was not good and yet they thought themselves experts. This was a contradiction.

Minister Farai had previously pointed out this same problem when she was reflecting on politicians, She said, "One problem with education is that everybody thinks they are experts on education and so they want to make decisions on everything."

Theme Two : The Problem of Conceptualization

During our second conversation we discussed problems which ZIMFEP has had to deal with since its inception in 1980. Jack mentioned the problem of lacking a common conceptualization, as one of their major problems. Jack called this 'the lack of a blueprint'. This problem has resulted in different interpretations of the same concept at the national level, in ZIMFEP pilot schools, as well as in associate member schools.

Jack. The concept has not been understood in the same way.... If we want this thing to be properly done let's correct the errors which were making it difficult for it to be achieved nationally. We need a standard definition of EWP and how it can be implemented so that a teacher has some form of a guide on implementing EWP in his/her classroom.

Researcher. What have you done so far about this?

Jack. As I said, we have realized our error in not providing a blueprint. We are now in the process of producing a blueprint in the form of a guide which can be debated and polished. We cannot influence policy with a verbal guide as we have been doing all along. It does not work.... We have produced a Production Unit Guide which people can discuss, amend and perfect. But the problem is that the Production Unit Guide is coming without a definition of the concept of EWP. It makes the PU guide the only written implementation guide yet it is an out of the classroom implementation method. What about inside the classroom? We have created a gap for the teacher whom we expect to implement EWP inside the classroom.

I was bothered by Jack's assumption that if they produce their EWP blueprint then everything would be alright. So I sought further clarification:

Researcher. I think that even after you have produced your blueprint you might still be faced with many social and political problems. For an example, we have people in high places in government who, as we have observed before, say they know what is good for everybody. We also have parents who still realize that if their child becomes a teacher he/she will be better off, both status and salary-wise, than the child who becomes a carpenter or a builder no matter how much of an 'intellectual worker' he/she becomes. If we don't change these other social variables and realities then ZIMFEP will be forever marginalized.

I also think this is where government is important. Here you are, striving to produce this all rounded person, but then when you look at government you see that they are more concerned with the academic or mental capacity of a child which will make them pass their 'O' and 'A' Level examinations. Industry, on the other hand, still determines the type of worker they want to employ, who may not necessarily be what you are producing. My point is that we still have to influence change in these other sectors of our society for us to be able to change both our education system and the development models supported by our present education system.

Jack. You have now gone into the most difficult area of the need to change attitudes. Our people need to change from the colonial attitudes of respecting academic achievement as opposed to productive achievements. We are kind of also benefitting from this Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) which our government is presently undertaking. ESAP has caused the government and industry to go into massive retrenchment of workers. If these people had other skills, they would keep them going while looking for other jobs or other factories to open. They could also have a choice to go on permanent self employment and stop worrying about retrenchment... ESAP is making more and more people realize the importance of an alternative system of education which we are offering. The fact that we are offering a variety of skills will enable people to realize that even if they are retrenched they can still survive.

Minister Farai had made the same observation during our second conversation when we were talking about one of ZIMFEP's most successful vocational schools for lowly educated adult ex-combatants from the war of liberation. Its graduates have been involved in a number of very successful co-operatives. Minister Farai mentioned that there has been a high demand for a school like ZIMFEP's Mupfure College from the locals because of the success of the co-operatives like Grow More Trees, a building and carpentry Co-operative who have bought their own plot, built their own factory and were building their own houses. This is an indication that an alternative system of education will most likely improve the basic living conditions of common people and, thus, develop the

country. If you develop people you also develop a country.

> **Farai**. So people have approached us saying why are these schools only for ex-combatants. They learn to earn their living and people can see the value of that. Like now if you were to go to parents whose children have not done so well, say you were to go to Mbare or Mabvuku high density suburbs and were to say to parents, we offer you a variety of things including the Mupfure path, you will see that they will choose Mupfure because they see the value of it... But we are not allowing them this opportunity, we are stuffing them all into 'O' Levels.

Theme Three : Re-conceptualizing the Task of ZIMFEP as that of Developing an Alternative Education Model for a Relevant Development Model

In our first conversation, Jack had mentioned that according to his understanding, the original idea of ZIMFEP as the testing ground for EWP before it is adopted as the national education policy was still standing. I cross checked this information with Minister Farai during our third conversation.

According to Farai, government had realized that we have different people with different expectations. Ministers and other executives, for example, do not send their children to EWP schools, they go to private schools or abroad. We have elites who still want their children to get an elitist kind of education. EWP then becomes another parallel education system among other systems.

After a long discussion on the above issue of parallel systems with Jack who was resisting parallelness, we came to the following conclusion:

> **Researcher**. What has come out from our conversation since the last time we met is that as a country we must come to a general understanding of say, when we are talking about EWP what do we mean? It must be the same meaning, we must not differ there. When we talk of a purely elitist education, what do we mean? So that when we send our children to an elitist school we know what they will be getting. When we send our children to EWP schools, we also know what they will be getting. Those become the parallels which Farai talked about.

After my summation of what we understood about parallel systems, Jack made sure

that he had the last word, and this is what he said:

> **Jack**. We have taken too long to make a real impact and that is why we still have these parallels in our education system. It's high time we neutralize the other concepts to remain with one. The problem with parallels is that we produce two different kinds of people. The absence of a blueprint from us, both definitional and pedagogical has left it (EWP) as an alternative which can go on indefinitely. In the end you create two kinds of people in a society, one from a very respected school, like the former Group A Whites only schools or whatever, and another one from the practical type. You are dividing society.

It is evident from the conversations with both minister Farai and Jack, on EWP as a concept, that EWP is desirable as an education system for Zimbabwe. EWP would enable the link between school and the world of work to be established which, in turn, would lead to a more realistic and relevant development of the country. The student, as Jack put it, would be the 'change agent' of the country.

Theme Four : The Lack of Government Consultations with ZIMFEP on Curriculum Policies Similar to EWP

During the conversations I conducted for this study I learnt that the Ministry of Education was involved in curriculum experiments of what they called vocational high schools. The students who would graduate from these schools would get a National Foundation Certificate from the Ministry of Manpower Planning in conjunction with the Ministry of Education. This would be in addition to 'O' Level certificates. This to me is an indication that even though government has not adopted EWP as the national education system, it still acknowledges the importance of skills-related education in national development.

During our third conversation I asked Jack whether government had consulted them during the planning stage of this vocational curriculum to avoid duplication with similar things which ZIMFEP was doing. Jack replied:

Jack. No, not real full consultations. They just visited our schools to choose those which they wanted to include in their experiments but we were never told of what they were looking for and we were never told of their findings. That is why I call them half consultations. If ever the National Foundation materials were tested, we are not aware of it. We were also told to provide more equipment for our schools which they had chosen to include in their National Foundation program.

I asked Jack how they could ensure full consultations on such important curriculum issues, especially since decisions like these would affect what they were doing. I also asked him about what they were doing in order for them to be involved. Such involvement, I thought, would help in avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts and wastage of resources.

Before this meeting with Jack, I had also read the government's First Five Year Development Plan which had come out at the beginning of ESAP. I noticed that on education the emphasis was on skills development without any talk of the other supporting intellectual requirement. EWP as a concept was only given a paragraph in this plan. This to me showed what place EWP was given by government. The emphasis, as I saw it, was on human resource training without specifying how it would be done. I, therefore, probed further:

Researcher. Doesn't this bother you too?

Jack. You are correct, because one of our major problems is that when politicians discuss EWP they will mostly be looking at one aspect of it, the economic aspect and they leave out the other educational aspects completely. It ceases to be EWP when any of its three pillars of economic, political and pedagogical is left out.

It's not like we never tried to be involved in their curriculum planning activities. For example, we asked to be involved in national curriculum panels. But such involvement was not very useful. Our ideas could sometimes be accepted but most times they would go ahead and do what they wanted to do first than what we had suggested. There was no preference of our views above all others. It was not obligatory for such committees to take our views. We were mostly sidelined.

It was at this point that I decided to go and talk to the participant from the

Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), in the Ministry of Education. This is where I met Magaya.

D. Magaya

Magaya was one of the many possible participants for my study suggested to me by Minister Farai on my first visit to her office. Although I had never met Magaya before, I chose him because he was in charge of technical education at the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), a position which gives him curriculum policy making and/or planning and implementation responsibilities. My other reason for choosing Magaya was that he was not and had not been involved in EWP before. I wanted to capture the reflections of the Ministry of Education on EWP through the eyes of a senior official with responsibilities who had the potential to affect EWP and yet had had no direct personal involvement in the design or implementation of EWP. Finally, I wanted a participant from whom I could also find out about CDU curriculum reforms similar to EWP introduced since independence and how these were linked to national development strategies.

I had three conversation sessions with Magaya in his office. The first meeting was a familiarization meeting. We spent an hour talking about ourselves, our professional backgrounds and our interests in education. It was also during this first meeting that I gave Magaya guideline questions for our next meeting. I explained to him that he was free to include any additional questions if he wanted to.

The following are the themes which emerged from the conversation meetings with Magaya:

1. Understanding vocational education since pre-independence.
2. Curriculum reforms in the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and the National Foundation Certificate Program versus ZIMFEP'S EWP programs.

Theme One : Understanding Vocational Education since Pre-Independence

It was during our second conversation that I asked Magaya to tell me what he understood by EWP. He said that he would make himself better understood if he started from the colonial point of view of vocational education. So he started off by talking about the colonial F2 system which he said he had gone through as a student.

> **Magaya**. The F2 system was a curriculum meant for 'slow' learners. A student who could not do maths, who could not do science, and who could not do other academic areas proficiently would be led towards this more skills oriented course. Unfortunately this system was for black kids only. The colonial government designed a low level metalwork syllabus, agriculture, woodwork, home economics and building curricula as the most suitable for the black 'slow' learners.... it was common public knowledge that this system was for 'failures' and thus its graduates were lowly regarded in society. It was even graded like the primary education, Grade 8 to Grade 11, while the other mainstream system was Form 2 - Form 4.
>
> With the coming of independence things began to change. I guess the politicians did not want this type of inferior education. They wanted to revamp this F2 area and teach these same subjects with a more academic orientation rather than just skills orientation. We now have metalwork at Form 2 Level (Grade 9) and woodwork, building studies, and agriculture, and home economics for the 'O' Level Cambridge Certificate.
>
> **Researcher**. Are there any other technical subject areas that have changed from those days?
>
> **Magaya**. The first step was the localization of the content material that could be taught. In other words, the curriculum was then designed with more of a local content so that whatever materials are used would be locally developed and, to a large extent, the testing would also be done locally without having to depend on Cambridge in Britain. Although we have not fully localized exams the movement is towards that goal. In other words we would like to make everything Zimbabwean although we might require some specific technical co-operation with Cambridge.

Theme Two : Curriculum Reforms in CDU and the National Foundation Certificate Program

Magaya talked at length about the progress which CDU had made especially in subjects which require no electrical equipment like agriculture and woodwork. He

mentioned that the 90s for Zimbabwe had meant vocationalization of education.

We discussed the role of ESAP and its resultant high rate of unemployment as some of the deciding factors towards vocationalization. The next issue we discussed was the National Foundation Certificate program. This is the program which those in ZIMFEP think is duplicating what they have been doing all along. Magaya began by explaining what the National Foundation Certificate was all about. He said that this program is still at the piloting stage.

> **Magaya**. It is in its third year of trials. It is being offered to 200 schools which have the machinery and infrastructure to offer students a more practical skills training while at the same time meeting all other 'O' Level requirements. The subjects offered include basic machine shop, basic engineering, joinery, cabinet making, brick laying, textiles, etc. These practical subjects are examined and certified by the Ministry of Manpower Planning in conjunction with the Ministry of Higher Education. At the end of the three year trial period the demand and usefulness of these courses will be determined and then more schools will be included.

I asked Magaya how he viewed ZIMFEP's EWP activities vis a vis the National Foundation Certificate program. The answer I got was unexpected. He said:

> **Magaya**. I have not been exposed to ZIMFEP nor its Education with Production programs. I don't know what is involved in it.

I was aware that Magaya was not and had not been involved in EWP unlike all the other participants of this study, but I did not expect him to be unaware of what it is all about, given that he worked in a related area. Magaya was in charge of technical subjects and vocational education programs at the Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education. These responsibilities were good enough reasons for him to have tried to find out more about other sectors of education in Zimbabwe involved in similar pursuits in education as his. But realizing that he was not aware, I told him what EWP was about and the work of ZIMFEP.

Awareness is semiotically understood here to signify consciousness. Magaya's words show that there was a lack of consciousness at the policy planning level within the Ministry of Education. This may also imply lack of communication between MOE and ZIMFEP. Consciousness presupposes availability of both information and clear communication lines, which appeared lacking in this case. Realizing this, I explained to Magaya and allowed him to reflect on what EWP meant. After this, Magaya was more willing to open up to the conversation on EWP.

> **Magaya**. Now I remember that I heard something about some schools offering EWP. The problem is that they have never given us a syllabus which could e.g. specify the objectives of EWP and how it could be implemented. The concept is a good one if it is properly managed and explained. But if you go on, on your own like that without producing a document which would probably support you in what you are doing or would lead you to perform certain tasks for certain goals then it doesn't make much sense.

Maybe Magaya was justified in his ignorance about NGOs like ZIMFEP which are working for the same goals as he and those under him were doing. This is more so if we consider ZIMFEP's problems arising from a lack of a 'blueprint' as Jack mentioned.

Our understanding at the end of our third conversation was that ZIMFEP and CDU's National Foundation Certificate program were parallel projects chasing after the same goals. The advantage of CDU's program was that the extra practical side of their Form Three and Four schooling was examined and certificated. ZIMFEP's practical side of technical subjects was, on the other hand, not certificated. Thus, if a student fails his/her 'O' Level examinations there is no acknowledgement that they had done something extra. The current system has no way of recognizing practical skills acquired by EWP students. Nhundu and Chivore (1993) made a similar observation when they recommended that the national examination system be restructured to allow it to test for productive/practical skills and attitudinal changes acquired by EWP students.

Following this conversation, I was led to conclude that both the National

Foundation program and EWP are good programs, striving to equip students with real life related productive skills in secondary schools. The problem is that there is no collaboration and co-ordination between the two. If CDU and ZIMFEP were to collaborate, they could do better together than when parallel. They could also save time and money by not duplicating efforts.

E. Bob

Bob, the fourth participant in this study, was interested in discussing issues of attitudes, mores and values as they affect the type of individual that schools produce. He was also interested in talking about politics in education. This did not surprise me, though, because for the six years that I have known Bob he has always been preoccupied with issues of politics and ideology.

Bob has worked for the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP) since its inception. He started off as a teacher at one of the ZIMFEP schools and later joined the ZIMFEP secretariat. I chose Bob for this study because of his long service in EWP and also because he provides a political balance at the ZIMFEP secretariat.

This political balance comes from the fact that Bob is one of the few people at the ZIMFEP secretariat who belonged to the other political party (ZAPU) which also fought a protracted guerilla war for Zimbabwe's independence together with ZANU. When the war was over ZAPU, which had lost the first democratic elections, is alleged to have been behind rebel attempts to oust ZANU from power. While this was happening ZIMFEP was one of the very few organizations which had people working for it from both political parties, mostly at its schools.

Below are the themes which came out of the four conversations which I had with Bob:

1. The rural people as the starting point for development strategies.

2. The kind of individual which schools must produce for the chosen development strategies.
3. The role of foreigners in national development.

Theme One : Rural People as the Starting Point of Development Strategies

Our first conversation meeting was spent with Bob updating me on what had happened in ZIMFEP since I left in 1991. We also used this time for me to tell Bob about my research interests. I gave Bob the questions which were to provide guidelines for our second conversation meeting, and told him to treat the questions only as conversation openers and that he was free to add and/or subtract what he wanted.

"What do you understand to be the meaning of development within the Zimbabwean context?" was the question which started off my second conversation with Bob. To Bob development meant uplifting the standards of living of those in the rural areas who constitute more than 60% of the black population of Zimbabwe. This, according to him, was only fair because they were the most disadvantaged during colonialism which drove them to the poorest soil of the country where subsistence farming was almost impossible.

We then identified things which would uplift the rural poor's standard of living, things like the speeding up of the program of land redistribution which relocates rural blacks from sandy infertile lands to areas suitable for farming. We agreed that land redistribution was very important if we want blacks to participate in the development of Zimbabwe whose economy is primarily based on agriculture. The peasants would then be able to achieve self sufficiency and possibly move from subsistence farming to commercial farming (which is still largely under white monopoly). This would in turn prevent the current urban migration which is increasing unemployment and street kids in urban centres.

The next area of rural development which Bob mentioned was the provision of

basic infrastructure for successful commercial farming; things like roads, water and appropriate machinery if possible.

Theme Two : The Kind of Individual which Schools must Produce for the Chosen Development Strategy.

Since land and agriculture are the main pillars of the Zimbabwean economy it also makes sense that education has to produce people who can make the most out of the land. At present the peasant farmers lack training in agriculture. Their farming activities are, as Minister Farai put it, "hit and miss".

Besides the lack of training, the rural people are involved in fighting the colonial attitudes which had brought up people to see production as punishment or low stuff for the uneducated. Colonialism had inculcated negative values towards manual labour in us, observed Bob.

> **Bob**. We need to give children skills-related knowledge so that when they leave school they can produce better on the land. The colonial masters believed that the African could only work under their close supervision so much that when you were not closely supervised you believed you could not be very productive. Most of us Africans when we finished school we were always thinking of seeking employment.

There was no way that one could think of forming his own company or farm. You could not get the farm even if you wanted to and secondly you would not be allowed by the colonial government to start your own company for fear of competing with white businesses, I added.

> **Bob**. How do you change the colonial norms and values in our society, you may ask? Through involving our children in meaningful productive labour. Through telling the students again and again that wealth is created through production. And, by giving them entrepreneurial skills. This is what Zimfep has been trying to do in its EWP schools. We have been striving to equip students with skills which prepare them for life.

" But which life?", I asked.

I also reminded Bob that since Cecil John Rhodes first 'colonized' Zimbabwe, which he called Rhodesia after himself, and brought the first white settlers in 1890, the black population has been delegated all the productive manual labour which created the settler's wealth. The blacks were made to believe that they were inferior and that's why they were to do the 'dirty' work. The whites on the other hand only occupied managerial and white collar positions. Thus for those 90 colonial years (from 1890 to 1980) the black people have come to regard white collar jobs highly and yearned for their children to get these jobs.

> **Researcher**. It is O.K. to say lets change the colonial attitudes in schools but the question is whether society is ready for such changes. I am aware that the government has always talked about this, especially towards elections, but have they really done anything tangible to bring the mental and manual work to par? I am also aware that our society still regards highly a person who says I am a doctor to a 'dhaka boy' (brick layer).

> **Bob**. At the present moment there is nothing going on in government to change these colonial values and I wouldn't expect this government to do anything much. We need a revolutionary in government to see things this way.

During my second conversation with Minister Farai I had asked her what government has done to help these societal changes. She had explained that in terms of government the whole issue was made problematic with the level of expectations of the society and also the demands of parents. Parents still wanted their children to get an academic education. She had also mentioned before that cabinet had refused the recommendation of the Education Review Committee on 'O' Levels. To her, this kind of refusal also mirrored societal values of what kind of education was good for their children.

"Why are people not wanting to change?' she inquired, "its a question of stages of development. We are having a crisis of values. If we were to ask who won the war we

may say the Rhodesians won because their values won. We are still following their values."

Theme Three : The Role of Foreigners in Zimbabwe's Development Struggles

The role of foreigners, like multinational companies, has always been viewed with misgivings by blacks in Zimbabwe because of our colonial experience. In our second conversation, Bob talked a lot about foreigners and their effect on Zimbabwe's development. According to Bob this foreign "interference" affects the education system of a country just as much as it affects the economic system:

> **Bob**. The other problem with foreigners is at an international level. We are aware that developed countries never wanted the underdeveloped countries to control their own economies. This, I think is one of the reasons why the World Bank refused to support us with funds for equipment when the government wanted to introduce technical subjects in all schools. You hear them say that they want us to be self-sufficient. By this they don't mean empowering us to control our economies. They always find ways of making us dependent on them.

I thought the problem was also with the NGOs and government itself for not screening the 'donors' and 'investors' before they accept them.

> **Bob**. In most cases these foreigners won't be that willing to reveal themselves. You have to determine yourselves what they really want, but normally at the end of it all its us who lose. It's unfortunate that our leaders just play the compradore role.... This is why as educators we have to give the children, who are our future leaders, that type of education which enables them to deal with these multinational evils. This is why education is a very important element of the superstructure of society.

I also learnt from Bob, during our third conversation, that NGOs, ZIMFEP included, had been discussing the need to hold seminars where they would invite high level officials from external donors, the World Bank, IMF and other multinationals, to find out exactly what they think because:

> **Bob**. Once we know what and how they think then we can develop means and methods of combating them. Because if you don't know the position of the enemy you cannot attack.

Our conversation then drifted to donations in kind like machinery, which appear innocent on face value, yet have serious repercussions on a country's technological development. We talked about donors who give machinery which they choose without consultations with the receiving country. Thus people end up getting technology which is not appropriate for their needs. Minister Farai had referred to it as 'bad technology and bad management'.

It becomes bad management in that the machinery usually comes with an 'expert expat' to fix and sometimes operate the machinery. Usually 50% of the donated or loaned funds goes to pay for the salary and upkeep of the expatriate. Bob also observed that in some cases where the locals are trained to operate and fix the machinery, there is always a condition attached for all spare parts to be sourced from the 'donor' country only, even if they could be obtained elsewhere cheaper.

> **Bob**. This is another way of hijacking Third World development. Most of us are so happy when we receive these technologies without thinking deeply of their implications. We need clear ears and eyes "okunyatsoongorora" (scrutinize) what is happening. So your statement of them wanting us to be always behind them and under their armpit is very true.

F. Interpreting Voices from the School

The last stage of my research took me to Taedza secondary school which is one of ten ZIMFEP's EWP schools. I was by then armed with the national view of EWP as well as the views from ZIMFEP planners and educators. At this point I was now looking at how these EWP policies and plans are interpreted at the implementation level (the schools). Do schools see and understand EWP the way it is done at the top? If not, why? Would

they do things differently? Under what conditions are they prepared to change? These were some of the general questions which were to guide this study during my visits to Taedza school.

I observed the classroom teaching of five teachers: English language, mathematics, geography, woodwork and science. I was particularly interested in finding out how they linked theory with practice or real life situations. After the observations I would give the teacher a list of questions and issues originating from my observation of their teaching. We then set up an appointment where the teacher would have the chance to respond to my questions and observations and discuss what should have been the best EWP way to teach that lesson and why.

It was after these discussions with teachers that I made three appointments for conversations with the headmaster to talk about my findings. From there I went back again to ZIMFEP where I gave the participants the opportunity to respond to what was happening at Taedza school.

The following are the themes which emerged from the classroom observations and the response of the headmaster and ZIMFEP educators:

1. Linking classroom and practical situations.
2. Examinations and their effect on the quality of education.
3. Production Units (PUs) and co-operative development.
4. On site staff development.

Theme One : Linking Classroom and Practical Situations

This theme was the central theme from my visits to Taedza secondary school because it is one of the key requirements of EWP that children must learn academic theory and use the knowledge to produce goods and services for sale or for use to solve their everyday problems.

Central as this theme might be, my finding was that this link was absent in all the classrooms I observed. I was fortunate in that all the topics covered in the classrooms which I observed had possibilities of readily linking them to practical life. When I asked the teachers how they would teach the same lesson again but from an EWP point of view, I was surprised by how much they knew. The reasons which they gave me for not doing this were, among others: insufficient time, long syllabuses, large classes, incompatible examinations system, no enough equipment, and a lack of commitment.

> **Teacher A**. The syllabus is very long so that one has got to race against time to finish it before the examinations. If we don't finish the syllabus in time for examinations then we have problems.

Teacher A was responding to the question "Why is it that you are not linking theory with practice as evidenced by the lesson I observed?" This teacher was teaching about soil conservation. They talked about gorges and other such soil erosion land forms. The students were referred to the drawings in their text books for illustrations of the land forms.

In the follow up conversation I asked the teacher if it would not have been better if they had visited a nearby gorge.

> **Teacher A**. The type of soil erosion which I talked about occurs more in the rural areas where there is over population. Even if such trips were possible we lack transport to take us there. This is coupled with the fact that we have big classes and one teacher cannot handle such excursions.

This teacher could have at least discussed how students could help with soil conservation in their villages. Couldn't he even have given the students a holiday assignment of researching problems of soil erosion and conservation at home? This could be a helpful venture which links classroom theory with the realities in the homes of the students. Such teaching would lead students to be aware that they can change and improve their reality; a clear statement of the natural link between EWP and national development.

> **Teacher B**. We don't have the time for all that. We just want to finish the syllabus and hope that the students will pass.

Teacher B was teaching mathematical scale drawing of buildings. Unfortunately her lesson did not go beyond mathematical calculations to cover things like the sociological and economic determinants of the choice of one building against another. The lesson also concentrated on conventional brick houses yet in the villages where most of the students come from, we find more thatched and round huts than brick houses.

> **Teacher C**. The only extra time we have is weekends but one would like to rest on those days.

Teacher C was teaching woodwork. He was teaching joints for the toilet paper holders they were making. He had the same problem as the maths teacher because his discussion was limited to urban toilets. Different toilets found in the villages were not discussed. The teacher said that this was because the students from the villages were shy and not prepared to discuss their toilets because those from the urban background would laugh at their 'substandard' rural toilets. Realizing that the truth of a situation never reveals itself by itself until it is provoked (Smith, 1991), I kept on probing until Teacher C finally confessed that:

> **Teacher C**. Even if they are prepared to discuss their types of toilets, I would not allow them to design their own type of toilet paper holders because everybody would end up doing their own thing. I don't have time for that and the syllabus and examinations ask only about the conventional modern things.

Teacher C reveals in his statement the myth of modernization. This myth comes from teaching only for 'modern' things as if that will automatically modernize the lives of the village children and their homes. This is not the reality of the Zimbabwean situation where ESAP programs meant to 'modernize' the country are starting from the urban centres and are expected to 'trickle down' to the villages.

Teacher D. You just want to use a method which is not time consuming in terms of the syllabus.

Teacher D is a science teacher. His lesson was on blood circulation. They talked about vessels, arteries, and the heart blood related diseases like thrombosis in human beings and similar diseases in animals. They had also discussed tick borne diseases in animals. The lesson was taught very well with student participation, charts and the like. What this lesson lacked was a touch on real life. It showed a remoteness of the school from real life, yet in their mission EWP schools have a commitment to link classroom knowledge to real life work situations.

I pointed out to the teacher that the students could have gone to the local villages and veterinary clinics or local Agriculture and Extension (Agritex) offices to find out more about ticks and other related diseases in animals. They could also have been given holiday assignments which could possibly take them to hospitals or clinics near their homes.

Teacher D himself even mentioned that they could have dissected a goat or rat to see the arteries and veins using the school's microscope. As he explained, this is because "Sometimes what you see on a diagram is only a simplification of the real thing. If you can identify something on the real thing you get a better understanding of it than simply looking at it on a diagram." This persuaded me to pursue the conversation further.

Researcher. Do you believe that if you had gone beyond the syllabus like you are now suggesting, the students could even do better in their examinations.

"Ya, I believe that," he said.

"Then why did you not do it that way?" I probed.

"Syllabus and examination deadlines" was his reply.

Theme Two : Examinations and their Effect on Quality Education

All the teachers who participated in this research mentioned passing 'O' Level examinations as their primary goal in teaching. Minister Farai had earlier on also talked about cabinet Ministers' preference of 'O' and 'A' Levels systems over alternative examination systems. According to Farai, this was the main stumbling block to more meaningful alternatives.

"But we are not allowing them this opportunity," she said. "We are stuffing them all into 'O' Levels."

Jack was very emotional on this issue too. He accused the Taedza school teachers of being preoccupied with examinations, "What exams demand they do, but what EWP demands they don't," he said.

Teacher A, the geography teacher, was more realistic about this examination issue. He steered our conversation to the other perspective which made teachers and students be 'preoccupied' with exams, the perspective of the type of 'A' which society was looking for on the students' certificates.

> **Teacher A**. If you try to make your lessons more practical to what affects the lives of the children you run the risk of not finishing the syllabus. Yet one has to finish the whole syllabus since you don't know which topics would be examined. And if you don't, when the results are out people don't consider the practicality of your teaching. People are not worried about this production of a whole person we are talking about. What they are after is how many of your students passed... Right away we cannot say that a person who is very good at the practical side would be recognized because what is most important to people are how many 'A's they get. We never say how good was he in terms of writing a story and such things. You see, this is never tested. All that is never taken into account... Our lives as teachers and students tend to be very much affected by examinations. You cannot do what you want when what you are worried about is that the students should pass the 'O' Levels they are expected to pass.

These, I agreed, are some practical realities and dilemmas facing all teachers in Zimbabwe and more so those who are supposed to be piloting EWP.

G. The Response from the Minister and ZIMFEP Educators.

Jack dismissed the problem of time as being one of the reasons why teachers at Taedza were not doing things as they should be done. He said:

> **Jack**. They have time for sports and no time for even team planning of lessons. But you still need to do lesson plans whether you do it jointly or individually. I used to remind them that the hour which they would use for planning is the same one hour which they could use together. [Jack used to be in the school administration of Taedza school before he joined the ZIMFEP secretariat.]

For Minister Farai the problem with the Taedza teachers was that of lacking experience. This, she said was common even in government schools.

> **Farai**. The type of teacher who can link the intellectual and the practical is a very highly developed intellectual as well as a practical person. Actually a lot of our teachers are not at that level. Our teachers tend to want to repeat things that they have seen being done. They are not willing to relate new things to theory and practice. They say I know this theory it's in a book and I can do it as the book does it. This is why teachers get very upset if you change their books. They think that the book must be static and they can repeat it.

Minister Farai's observation was a correct interpretation of what is happening at Taedza secondary school. I saw these 'highly' developed as well as the 'lowly' developed teachers. But unfortunately there was no deliberate effort by both the ZIMFEP officials and the school's administration to advance the 'poor' teachers (this issue is discussed in more detail in theme three below).

Bob, one of the ZIMFEP educators responsible for education activities in schools, completely dismissed all the problems raised by teachers at Taedza school when I told him about them. He said that the problems were unfounded and that the real reason was laziness and lack of commitment.

> **Bob**. They are just interested in covering the syllabus and not the acquisition of knowledge and skills by students. Whether the child understands the lesson or not is immaterial to them.

I told Bob that if he had been an eye witness as I had been, he would not be taking these problems as lightly as he was doing.

> **Researcher**. The teachers are doing a disservice to those students who were not academically very 'smart' and are only serving the intelligent ones. This becomes the problem of a purely academic lecturing type of teaching which I observed in action at Taedza school. Unfortunately it is again the 'smart' students who have more choices in life after school. After passing their exams they can choose to be self-employed, or go for further education or seek employment. The not-so-smart ones have no such choices. Thus, we in ZIMFEP have to go to the teachers and talk to them about the importance of benefitting both types of students and how to do it. This, as I have found out, you don't do. I realize that when you are the observer as I am, you pick a lot of these things which you and everybody else are taking for granted.

After a long conversation which was more like an argument than a conversation, I realized that the conversation was degenerating into defending our respective positions on this issue. I therefore suggested that we break for the day and allow ourselves to independently reflect on what was happening at Taedza secondary school before resuming our conversation the following day. This time the conversation was more productive indicating that our independent reflections had provided us with a better understanding of the issues at stake.

The response from ZIMFEP and the Minister of Education can also show that they have fundamental differences of perception with teachers. This could partly point to a lack of communication between policy makers and implementers. These differences in perception which are associated with the organizational level at which participants are located are hermeneutically an indication of disabling pre-judgment on the part of policy makers about Taedza school teachers' way of teaching. There is, therefore, an urgent need for dialogue between MOE policy makers, ZIMFEP and EWP school administrators and teachers. Such dialogue may allow a fusion of their different horizons if all of them allow themselves to open up to new possibilities in EWP teaching.

Theme Three : On Site Staff Development for Taedza Secondary School

This theme was discussed in more detail with Dzidzai, the deputy headmaster of Taedza school. Dzidzai was at that time the acting headmaster since the headmaster was on study leave.

H. Dzidzai

Dzidzai had worked at Taedza school for about ten years, from being a teacher to deputy headmaster. I had known Dzidzai from my days at ZIMFEP. This is why on our first meeting we went straight into business without having to create familiarity first. I explained my research interests and what I wanted to do at his school.

It was during this first meeting that Dzidzai helped me choose the teachers and subject areas for my classroom observation as well as for general discussions. Dzidzai took this opportunity to update me on the developments at his school since I left the country on study leave.

It was only after my classroom visits and conversations with teachers that I entered into issues-oriented conversations with Dzidzai. The three conversations we had were in the form of feedback to Dzidzai of my findings and also hearing his side of the story. Our conversation on any particular issue always ended with both of us looking into future possibilities for productive education and activities at Taedza secondary school.

I opened our second conversation meeting with a run down of my findings. I told him that teachers were not linking intellectual and practical realities of the students in their teaching. This was a matter of concern to me because linking theory with practice is a very important aspect of EWP. I told Dzidzai that the teachers I had talked to had told me that they had no time to teach beyond examination requirements. They mentioned that their classes were too big that one would need the assistance of another teacher if they have to make trips. The teachers had also talked about syllabuses which are too long to finish.

The teachers had told me that they see no need to teach beyond the syllabus since nobody enforces it and they also see other teachers not doing so. They further pointed out that they did not get any rewards for doing so since the government, which pays their salaries, promotes them on the basis of academic teaching only.

I also told Dzidzai that I had learnt that his teachers did not cross consult or do team planning with other teachers teaching the same subject material. As a result there is unnecessary repetition. I gave him the example of the maths teacher whom I had observed teaching scale drawing which, I later learnt, had already been taught in the woodwork class. The only difference was that in maths they were working on buildings while the woodwork class had been designing trolleys. So they had repeated a concept without making students realize the relationship between scale drawing in maths and woodwork. If they had consulted each other they could have reinforced the students' understanding. I also told Dzidzai that the above observation led me to the conclusion that the school lacked deliberate staff development programs which prepare teachers to teach beyond simple teaching so that they can link their teaching to national development realities as expected of EWP schools.

> **Dzidzai**. They just lack time management. The issue of time is out. There is plenty of weekend time and there is also plenty of evening time for which they can request... Once we find a dedicated teacher you will find that the problem of time they talk about is erased. Commitment is the key thing when it comes to our teachers, they lack commitment, full stop! It depends on how the individual was taught in teacher training colleges and what potential he has.

The above statement shows that the headmaster lacked confidence in his teachers. It also shows blind prejudice which needs to be overcome through critical dialogue between the school administration and teachers. The teachers need to feel a sense of worthwhileness in their teaching and also feel that their efforts receive due recognition from the school administrator.

It also depends on what expectations the teachers are challenged with, was what Farai had said in a previous conversation. Farai had then pointed out that if society makes great demands on learners/teachers, only then can they develop ways of handling such demands. If society's demands are mediocre, the teacher/learner will respond accordingly. So the question to be asked concerns how challenging the demands being put on teachers/learners are.

> **Researcher**. Don't you think that relying on an individual teacher's expertise, as you suggested is dangerous? I think we need to encourage such expertise where it is and develop it where it lacks... Do you hold staff development workshops in order to nip these problems in the bud? I'm sure that you are aware of what can be done. You must also be aware of this unequal expertise in your teachers.

> **Dzidzai**. We do hold some workshops but not so often. The last one we had was about a year ago when we talked about linking theory and practice with the ZIMFEP personnel... We would expect such discussion to happen at departmental level where they can discuss linking what they teach and how to teach it. In a staff meeting, for instance, it won't be easy. Except when talking about production units. That we have done in staff meetings.

The irony of it is that even the Production Units (PUs) which the headmaster talked about a lot were hard to come by at Taedza school, as found out during this study (however, Production Units will be discussed in subsequent themes).

> **Dzidzai**. For instance to come up with PUs which are coming up right now it was out of a good amount of talking which in a way is a staff development exercise. It doesn't have to be something where you say O.K. now we are going to staff develop ourselves in this area. But the moment you start talking about things like PUs and their use and relevance to students' learning and so forth, you are already staff developing people.

> **Researcher**. Yes I agree with you, but my observation is that you stopped at just talking about it and not implementing it or making sure that the teachers are doing something about it. It's O.K. to make them aware of these things, and my findings confirm that this awareness in your teachers is present, but then there are no real follow ups.... Your school has no policy whether at school or departmental level which says that one must do 1-2-3 things. Don't you think it's necessary to have such policies rather than leaving it up to individual teachers and individual department heads, like what is happening now?

Dzidzai. We don't leave so much to the individual teacher. We don't discuss them that way, but like you are saying maybe follow ups are necessary. But a follow up can only come after one has observed a teacher teaching the lesson and then you say, but look here, if you had linked up with so and so over this one, that would be the best way in which one can come in.

In our third conversation Dzidzai had reflected on the issue of staff development at his school. He began by saying:

Dzidzai. You know what? After our last discussion I have come to believe that our problems also come from the type of staff that we get. We used to get anybody, but of late we said no. When we need a teacher we have to know exactly who we are getting. We now hold interviews with the prospective teacher to see what kind of a teacher he is before we accept him.

The three hours of our third and final conversation with Dzidzai ended with him making some resolutions for the future of Taedza school.

Dzidzai. I agree with you that one can make his staff the way he wants it to be.

Researcher. Yes because it's you who has to make things happen. You don't have to wait for people from ZIMFEP to make things happen for you. They are still as under-staffed as they were before I left. So at most they can come once or twice a year. And you know what, you are more aware of EWP and how to teach accordingly than most of the new ZIMFEP officers I have met. You are best situated to make things happen. You just need to ask for help whenever needed.

Dzidzai. I see that there is definite need to make ourselves into what we want to be. This I think calls for commitment from us the administration and the teachers. We may not have a lot of the teachers who have the stamina to go that extra mile, but I promise you, we will make the best of what we have. We will get there... Staff development is essential yes, but still when the interest is not there it will be difficult to generate it. It would be much better to know that you have the kind of people with whom you can say lets go and they will get going.

Dzidzai's last comments were a commitment to explore more into some of the problems and issues raised by this study. We may not have come out with solutions to all of their problems since this was not the intention of this study, but at least the study ignited

an interest for further explorations of their own. This, I believe, is an important aspect of any hermeneutic study. The end of such a study, like this one, would be a commitment to further explorations and not necessarily finding solutions right there. It is believed in hermeneutics that solutions come as people understand their tasks more and explore possibilities for solutions. These are basically the same national development issues which are directly linked to EWP. If and when people, as change agents, understand what they want, the possibilities available and how to get there, they would be more effective change agents. Thus, explorations of EWP possibilities become a step in the right direction of making teachers and students, as change agents, understand what, how and why they are supposed to do.

Communicating these possibilities and how to get there becomes another important step. As this research has found out, it appears there is no communication between the three levels involved in EWP implementation, comprising the MOE, ZIMFEP and teachers. They all saw the implementation problems experienced by teachers differently, including school administrators. For example, teachers at Taedza school blamed school administration and the Ministry of Education and its examination system for their non-implementation of EWP. The school administration, ZIMFEP and the Minister, on the other hand, blamed teachers' lack of commitment for failure to implement EWP. If they could all communicate and work together, things could turn out differently for Taedza school.

Theme Three : Production Units (PUs) and Cooperative Development as Important Aspects of Education with Production (EWP)

When I phoned Bob (the one who is presently responsible for education issues in ZIMFEP) to tell him that I had completed my visits and conversations with Taedza secondary school participants, his first response was, "What did you find out as their

reason for lack of PUs?" I told him that was the reason I was phoning, to make an appointment for us to talk about my findings.

Production Units (PUs) are a form of small enterprises at schools which are designed to help students acquire more practice in related classroom theory content and also generate some income for them. In a woodwork PU, for example, students use the knowledge about particular joints which they would have learnt in classroom theory and produce marketable products. These PUs are meant to give students hands-on business skills and experience necessary for their entrepreneurial ventures after school if they so wish to be self-employed or form cooperatives (ZIMFEP, 1992). In brief, PUs are designed to attain economic, pedagogical and socio-political rationales of EWP in that they:

a) facilitate the interaction of theory and practice through the application of classroom knowledge to production project work,
b) result in income generation from the sale of goods and services,
c) expose students to the virtues of cooperative work, and
d) imbibe them with values, attitudes and entrepreneurial leadership skills required for setting up individual or collective income-generating ventures after school.

The above aims underscore the centrality of Production Units in the conception and practice of Education with Production and how it contributes to national development in Zimbabwe.

Taedza secondary school was one of the few ZIMFEP schools whose PUs never seemed to work. The PUs formed would usually not last a year. ZIMFEP personnel blamed it on the "uncommitted" headmasters and teachers even when the same used to happen when Jack (now in ZIMFEP administration) was the headmaster of Taedza school. It was therefore not surprising that Bob was so anxious to know what my findings were. My findings about the lack of PUs at Taedza school were that ZIMFEP officials were as much to blame as the school and its administration.

What Taedza school students had in place of PUs are what I called 'production groups', which they call clubs. The groups included the newsletter group, the garden and the fashion and fabrics groups. During our second conversation Dzidzai gave these groups as examples of flourishing PUs of his school. This, according to me was not correct as I pointed out the following to Dzidzai:

> **Researcher**. But the problem with subject areas like fashion and fabrics and gardening activities is that these are some of the most convenient of all subjects when it comes to production activities. I remember that even in primary school whenever we took a sewing class we would actually sew things like bibs and other baby items. So such a subject does not serve as a good example of PUs. The same goes for gardening. The agriculture subject demands that students do productive activities like growing vegetables. Thus, when a school garden is flourishing and feeding the whole school, like what yours is doing, you can't tell whether students gain anything more than narrating how to make a vegetable bed in an exam. Such subjects cannot separate theory from practice. There are other subject areas like geography, maths and English which are not directly linked to production, of which we expect EWP schools to be the leading showcase on the link between such subjects and production. I think what they are doing now is teaching to meet the examination requirements of these subjects.

The other subject areas where one would expect to see PUs working well are practical subjects like wood work, metal work and building, all of which are offered at Taedza school. This was not the case with Taedza school. The woodwork teacher I talked to told me that he was aware that EWP was supposed to give students entrepreneurial skills for use at school as well as after graduation. He also told me that the woodwork syllabus he was using was very restrictive in that it made students produce little things like tooth brush holders, egg trays and other small items.

> **Researcher**. Do you see those skills as stipulated by the syllabus as adequate especially when they are limited to those little and not so useful things?

> **Teacher**. From Form 1-3 we teach them many different methods of joining pieces of wood. They have all those skills. With these skills given a student who is quite bright, he can actually design and make anything like say wardrobes... Because what is important is whether you know how to join these two pieces of wood. With that knowledge you can design anything big or small.

Researcher. So you see advantages of having a PU in this case because you talked of a student who is quite bright? The general usefulness is there, as you said, but it also needs being 'smart' to be able to utilize them. The problem I am finding with this is that it's those 'not-so-smart' ones who can't get jobs easily and who can't get entry into colleges who are not benefitting from your current practices. Is this how EWP curriculum is supposed to serve your students? Or do you see extra production activities or that chance to do something extra out of class, like PUs, beneficial to all students?

Teacher. It's quite benefitting because if they are given more time to learn one or two skills, the first time it could be very bad, the second and third time will see improvement. Maybe they also learn things which will benefit them when they are out on their own, e.g. how to order materials, how do you decide that this item is to be sold for $8, etc. I think it will be quite beneficial to have such a PU if the students are really interested in them.

Researcher. Such, I believe, is what EWP is all about; developing the individual child to the fullest. Such students are more prepared to contribute to national development projects when they leave school.

In a separate conversation Dzidzai, the headmaster, had confided that the problem of PUs was not with the students but the teachers. He had said:

Dzidzai. I have been approached by quite a number of students who want to start PUs, but we cannot allow students to do so on their own, they need a teacher as a mentor. Students have even tried to get mentors by promising teachers a percentage of their profits.

Researcher. Initiative as I see it in such a case is starting from the wrong direction. I believe that the teacher is best positioned to see the potential and interests of different students. It would therefore be best if teachers suggest and steer students towards the direction of their potential.

I. Fungai

Theme Four : We are our Own Problems in PU Development

Fungai was the last participant on my list of participants from ZIMFEP secretariat. I had deliberately put him at the end because of his job. His job provides the link between PUs as entrepreneurial ventures in schools and the world of work with special emphasis on

cooperatives. It is in Fungai's division that problems found in school leavers' cooperatives are fed back to schools for improvement in PUs before students from the next cohort of school leavers join the ZIMFEP cooperative movement.

Earlier on when I was making appointments for conversations with ZIMFEP officers I could not get Fungai. He was out of town. This did not bother me much because he was the last on my list. When I phoned him for an appointment after I had completed my school visits, I was disappointed to learn that he was leaving the country early the next morning for more than a month. He agreed to meet me in his office that day at 6 p.m. after he had taken care of his travel arrangements. This is how I ended up having only one long conversation with Fungai which took us almost to midnight to finish.

The one good thing about this conversation was that Fungai and myself had no need for any familiarization time since I had worked with Fungai for more than five years. We were both holding administrative positions at the same level, which meant that we attended planning and feedback meetings together. Thus, we started off by briefing each other on general issues like what we were doing as well as what my research was all about. We then talked about many issues in ZIMFEP and its schools as well as the future of the cooperative movement especially with the fall of the Soviet Union, since cooperatives have been associated with socialism. At independence in 1980, cooperatives were embraced as the ideal direction to egalitarian economic development for the majority black people who had been disadvantaged through colonialism.

Fungai pointed out that cooperatives had become unpopular in Zimbabwe since the fall of the Soviet Union. They had become 'victims of change'. But the salvation, for Fungai, was that the government still believed in cooperatives. He told me that ZIMFEP, on the other hand, was still emphasizing to cooperative members as well as to students that cooperatives were not different from any other wealth-creating enterprises. The other advantage he mentioned was that their clientele were PU graduates from EWP schools.

This was an advantage because as he put it:

> In ZIMFEP we believe that entrepreneurship starts from school. We mould children in the formative age. Thus by the time these students leave school they would have acquired basic business skills in their production units.

In our conversation we also went into the issue of changing colonial attitudes against manual work. Fungai believed that PUs play this role of changing negative attitudes about productive labour. This , I pointed out, was only true of schools where there are PUs. What happens at schools like Taedza where there are no PUs? This is where I thought that people in ZIMFEP might be creating their own problems.

Fungai found fault in implementation strategies used by ZIMFEP: "We are not being aggressive enough," he complained. This is also when Fungai revealed to me that he had stopped "wasting" his time on schools like Taedza. "We will go back to them when they become serious again," declared Fungai. This statement took me by surprise and I was lost for words to respond to such finality. This finality showed self-enclosed prejudice which, I felt, Fungai needed time to reflect upon it. This is when I wished we had more time to allow this reflection which I thought Fungai needed just as much as I did.

Other examples of how EWP implementers were creating their own problems were found at Taedza school. A good example is what I learnt had happened to the woodwork and building production units which had once existed at Taedza school. The story goes that when the school wanted shelves in their library they gave the job to a private contractor yet they had a woodwork PU which could have done the same job. Actually it was said that the school administration had given the job to this PU first and later changed their mind. I mentioned this to the headmaster.

> **Researcher**. Isn't this a contradiction of EWP principles? How can you motivate your students and staff towards production units when you can't trust their products?

> **Dzidzai**. All what we wanted was correct timing. The PU would take more time to provide the shelves which we wanted as quickly as possible. The durability aspect also made us decide to hire outsiders. You look at your own people and you say, can they do it? Your decision is based on these questions. But if you know they can deliver the goods then you can give them the job.

Dzidzai's words, once again, expose lack of confidence in what teachers and students can do. He questions their ability to produce durable goods and deliver them on time. It also shows an authoritarian attitude which stifles progress. On the contrary, teachers need guidance and encouragement that they can do it.

> **Researcher**. I don't know but I think such things discourage students and teachers. They will lose morale when you choose outsiders over local resources.

This leads us back to Farai's metaphors of growth stages and the need to 'nurture' as opposed to throwing budding black indigenous businesses into competition with multinationals and established white businesses which had thrived through generous colonial financial support. Upon further reflection on this 'need to nurture' issue, I thought this was a real dilemma. What could the school administration do in terms of not compromising time and quality? Was theirs the correct choice?

I would have no problem with this if it had stopped with one PU. But a similar discouragement had happened with the Building PU. It was during our third conversation that the headmaster had talked about students in the building classes who had expressed their wish to start a building Production Unit. I asked why they were not starting this PU. To which he replied, "They have handicaps which need to be cleared first."

I decided to probe further to find out what these 'handicaps' were since one of the teachers had told me that in 1989 they had a flourishing Building PU which was allegedly destroyed by the school administration. I found out that the handicap was to do with some work that the Building PU had done for the school. The headmaster confirmed that the administration felt that the payment they wanted for the job was 'excessive'. So a

compromise had to be reached over the figure to be paid. It appears that the teacher concerned was not happy about the figure paid to his students' PU. According to this teacher, he was so demoralized that he stopped volunteering his time to the PU and that was the end of the Building PU.

Fungai mentioned another weakness in ZIMFEP which I thought was a further indication of implementers creating their own problems. This is the dependence syndrome resulting from over reliance on donor funds for project implementation.

> **Fungai**. Who calls the shots? Donors dictate what to do with their money... When you want to give a loan to a budding cooperative venture, for example, they say give a grant. When you want to give a grant they say loan.... It's high time we move away from this donor dependency syndrome because any program which is dependent on donor aid is doomed to failure. So many NGOs have failed because of this.

"What then do we do? Do we give up or what?" asked Fungai rhetorically.

> **Fungai**. No we don't give up. Problems are there to be overcome. If there is no problem at work then there is no reason for you to be there. And remember, don't throw away the baby with the dirty water.

I decided not to ask for the meaning of this last riddle. It would have taken us another hour. Fungai was well known for his riddles.

Chapter V

RE-VISITING THE QUESTION OF EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

If we do not change our direction we are likely to end up where we are headed
-Chinese Proverb-

A. Introduction

The first section in this chapter attempts to synthesize issues of EWP, and their relationship to national development, as seen and expressed by participants through their voices in this study. It was found from conversations with participants that they generally equated national development with western modernization models of development. This was expressed in their choice of words used in conversations or in the semiotic meaning of their language.

The second part of this chapter deals with issues of international development since in our conversations participants had indicated that Zimbabwe's current development models are interwoven with and, to a large extent, dictated to by international development models. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the three guiding pillars of EWP to determine the extent to which they have been accomplished given that EWP is being implemented within a framework of a non-supportive and incompatible western development model currently prevailing in Zimbabwe because of the World Bank and IMF supported Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP).

Conversations conducted in this study provided some insights into the current understanding and implementation of EWP and showed that the attainment of the three pillars of EWP and their linkage to national development issues had met with limited

success. The study also found that all participants were, nevertheless, in agreement concerning the relevance and value of EWP curriculum to personal and national development. The consensus of participants in respect of these issues is succinctly summarized by Farai, the government minister, who candidly admitted that:

> As a theory (EWP) it remains a very important theory but in terms of practice we can say, what did we do? Did we manage to put the idea into a practicable form?

Farai together with other participants raised searching questions during conversations including: How are the EWP policies being linked to development needs of Zimbabwe? How is the structure of the existing conventional education system inhibiting the implementation of EWP? and How have international development models affected national development and the role of EWP in national development in Zimbabwe? These and related questions which emerged from conversations with participants provide the main focus for subsequent discussions in this chapter which seek to explore participants' meanings and understanding of EWP.

B. Reflections on Realities of Education and Development

After reflecting on the conversations with Minister Farai and Magaya (both representing the government position on EWP and development), Jack, Bob and Fungai (who represented ZIMFEP secretariat thinking), Dzidzai (representing local school administration thinking), and Taedza teachers (who presented the experiences of the implementers), this study found that participant interest and concern for national development issues tended to reflect the locations occupied by participants. For example, teachers appeared least concerned with national development issues. They showed a lot of interest in talking about their problems in implementing EWP. Their conversational language cites implementation obstacles such as 'lengthy syllabi', 'large classes',

'deadlines', and 'examinations' constraints. They are therefore concerned more with specific operational problems and issues on the implementation process itself rather than broader issues of national development concerns reflected in the conversations of the other participants.

The Minister, Bob, Jack, Fungai and, to a lesser extent, the school headmaster were concerned with broader issues of national development as well as those related to the link between EWP teaching approaches and national development. These participants expressed disappointment with Taedza school teachers whom they blamed for non-implementation of EWP because of their alleged 'laziness', 'lack of time management' and 'lack of commitment'. The word 'lazy' semiotically means lax, lag, or sluggish, while the word 'lack' means failure or fault, defective, blemish. The language of policy makers and ZIMFEP educators and administrators suggests that they have little or no professional respect and confidence in Taedza teachers when it comes to the implementation of EWP.

Participants from policy making and administrative levels who were concerned with educational and national development issues tended to express these meanings in terms such as 'realism', 'rural people', 'change of attitudes and values', 'outgrow', 'employment', 'all round person', 'teenager' and 'strategies'. These words are all abstract and they reflect the existing abstract views on education and national development held by those at the policy level. Use of such language which tends to intellectualize more than concretize curriculum and development issues further suggests that the people of Zimbabwe were still caught up in colonial hangover and in modernization myth. They wanted that which was modern even if it was abstract for themselves and their children.

For example, in one of our conversations Minister Farai told me a story which confirms this 'caughtness' to colonial values which the Zimbabwean society finds itself in. The story was that of a black parent whose son had been expelled from one of the most prestigious group A schools. Group A schools had been exclusively for whites during

white rule in Zimbabwe. At independence Group A schools together with other non-government, private or trust schools set up by companies, rich parents or education boards charged high fees which excluded the majority of black children. Some of them even expressed the desire to set up their own curricula or continue using British syllabuses (Masango and Nembaware, 1991). This particular school was owned and sponsored by Afrikaaners from South Africa. With independence, black parents were free to send their children to the group A secondary schools if they could afford the high fees. As it turned out, only the black elites could send their children to these 'best' schools. At times these schools would refuse to enrol black pupils. The Minister of Education could intervene on behalf of the black parents using anti-segregation laws.

The black parent in Minister Farai's story sought her intervention. Farai alleges that she could not do so in this case because it was a case of expulsion and not racial discrimination. Instead, she asked this parent to identify any other school and she would help in getting a place for the student. According to Farai, this parent refused that offer because he wanted his son to be educated at a school which was still at the apex of elitism as was this exclusive 'Boer' school.

Former 'whites only' schools and their type of education are still synonymous with the 'best' schools in post-independence Zimbabwe. In this case, a semiotic analysis of the signified word 'white' becomes a metaphor meaning the good and aspired for. The sign reflected to us is that of a perpetuation of white supremacy which colonial rule had put in place in Zimbabwe. The signifier 'blackness' is respectively a metaphor for the despised, below standard and undesired both politically, educationally and socially, just like colonialism had designed it to be. During colonialism and subsequent white governments, black education was below standard and mostly vocational in orientation as it was meant to produce cheap labour for the white people's economy (Zimbabwe, 1982).

The Rhodesian education system, as has been noted earlier, was created and

operated to serve and promote the interests of a small white dominated minority. In so doing education became a tool for maintaining social and economic inequalities between the black majority and the white minority. As Chidzero, in Riddell (1980), pointed out, inequality was the foundation of the Rhodesian society, underpinned and sustained by the education system. Education policies of the time had several structural impediments designed to exclude a large percentage of blacks from receiving all forms of education. There was, therefore, limited access to schools for blacks in contrast to universal education for the white population. There was also a very small number of places for further education for blacks in contrast to adequate facilities for white students.

The black system, as can be seen in Figure 1, produced a broad-based education pyramid in which students in secondary schools represented only four percent of the students in the system, while the education system for whites had 43 percent (Dorsey, 1975). Education for the whites was compulsory to age fifteen. The white student, on the one hand, proceeded automatically to a comprehensive secondary school level and, if sufficiently bright, was assured of going to the Sixth Form. The black child, on the other hand, entered a system that was voluntary and highly selective. For the black child, continuing at various levels depended upon his/her ability to pass examinations with a very high mark and parents' ability to pay school fees.

In 1975, for example, only 54.5 percent of the African grade one population completed the seven year primary school education, 9.9 percent went on to secondary school, 4 percent completed 'O' levels, and the number in 'A' level (qualifying to enter university) was 0.3 percent (Dorsey, 1981). These figures are similar to Riddell's (1970) earlier estimates that out of every 1 000 African school children, 250 never went to school, only 337 completed primary school, only 60 proceeded to secondary school, 37 reached 'O' level and less than 3 reached lower Sixth Form.

In an analysis of the 'bottle neck' system of education for blacks (Figure 1), Riddell

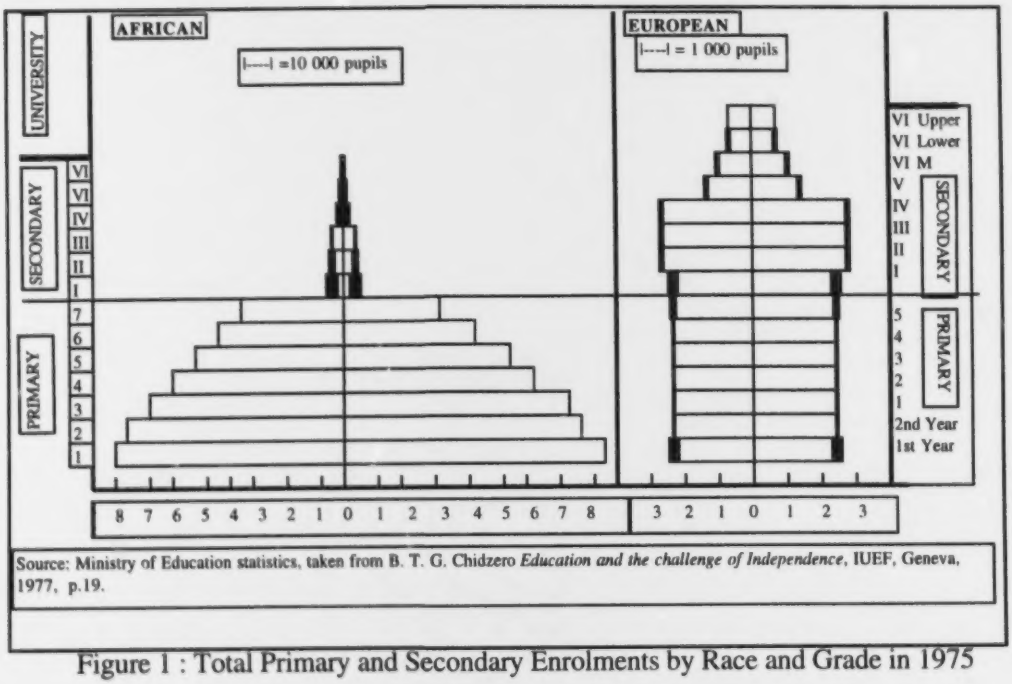

Figure 1 : Total Primary and Secondary Enrolments by Race and Grade in 1975

(1980:6) was struck by the determination of blacks amid these structural constraints when he remarked that "the failure of the majority to succeed has not prevented the rest from continuing to compete for the smaller number of available places at the top".

The employment sector was also a reflection of racial structures whereby the white working population had a monopoly of skilled managerial and technical jobs, while the vast majority of the black working population was employed in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs in the modern economy or as subsistence farmers in rural areas (Nhundu, 1988 and Riddell, 1980).

From the foregoing it becomes easy to understand why the liberation struggle was fundamentally motivated by the gross injustice of the economic deprivation of the black majority and especially as expressed through the inequalities of the land tenure system, the job preservation system, and the education system (Zimbabwe, 1982).

With the removal of racial discrimination it "is easy to understand the immediate

appeal of policies which would expand the present system of education and give blacks the opportunities that they have seen whites receive" (Riddell, 1980:6).

The superiority of white education over black education is not surprising when one examines colonial governments' expenditures on white and black education. According to Riddell (1980) during the 1977-78 financial year, the Rhodesian government spent $491 for each European pupil and only $54 for each black pupil. And as Riddell points out:

> In the ten years, 1967 to 1976 the state spent $20.7 million on capital account for European, Asian and Coloured education and only $11.2 million on Black education, this is more than 20 times as much for each European, Asian, Coloured child as for each Black child throughout the period (p. 23).

Jack (the ZIMFEP administrator) expressed his dissatisfaction with the rich/poor division of education in existence in Zimbabwe when he said:

> **Jack**. In the end you create two kinds of people in a society, one from a very respected school, like the former Group A Whites only schools or whatever, and another one from the practical type or EWP. You are dividing society.

A semiotic analysis of what Jack was saying reveals that Jack was really not happy that EWP schools only have black students and mostly from poor family backgrounds. This could be seen as perpetuation of the white-black divide of colonialism. Fourteen years ago there was nothing wrong with this setup because during that time ZIMFEP schools only took former refugee students from the war who were all black. In 1980, ZIMFEP schools had students from grade one to Form Four. Logically by 1990 this clientele would have passed through the EWP schools since a student who was in Grade One in 1980 would finish Form Four in 1990. This means that by 1990 or earlier, ZIMFEP schools would have been open to any student, white, black, rich or poor. But this was not so. Even at the time of this study ZIMFEP schools had an all black population and most likely from poor families. In a way, therefore, EWP is still a segregated system which may

explain Jack's apprehension.

Given the above argument one starts to question whether Zimbabwe is ready for post-independence changes. If the educational system which the colonialists had put into place is what is still aspired for by political leaders, parents and students 15 years after independence, then the future may not be that bright for Zimbabwe. A look at attitudes, mores and values currently in existence, as revealed by the conversations in this study, shows that Zimbabwe's development is still 'stuck' in colonial hangover.

The 'said' in government documents about the need to localize syllabuses, for example, reveals a different 'ideal' from what is in existence; an ideal which recognizes the need to emphasize local attitudes and not colonial ones. A government position paper presented at an assessment conference by Masango and Nembaware (199:6) says that:

> The main aim of localization was to introduce syllabuses relevant to Zimbabwe, consistent with its policies and national goals. British syllabuses were designed for the British in a British environment. This would no longer do for an independent Zimbabwe.

The above statement shows that at a theoretical level government officers were very cognisant about what is good for post-independent Zimbabwe. The problem comes at the implementation level where syllabuses, as expressed in this study, are examination driven and not relevance driven as wished at the policy planning level. Hence policies formulated under such circumstances eventually become what Farai called 'wish lists' because they never get implemented.

At the values level, the English accent of black students from Group A schools is another case in point. Students from these schools talk with an accent which is like that of someone who wants to be more British than the British themselves. People call them the 'nose brigades' because they sound as though they are talking from their noses. Commenting on this crisis of values, Minister Farai suggested that Zimbabweans must

develop their own identity:

> **Farai**. Naturally we are part of the world, universal knowledge is our knowledge as well. We have to use our past, our present, and the universal experience to create our own culture and not be a nation of imitators... If we were to ask who won the war we may say the Rhodesians won because their values won. We are still following their values.

Farai's language is portraying a stuckness to colonialism which the teachers I observed and talked to at Taedza school also characterized by the selection of what they taught and produced, as well as by the teaching methods they used. One example is the woodwork teacher who taught about toilet paper holders. He only talked about the conventional urban, flushable toilet systems. He also discouraged the students from making holders for the traditional rural toilet which ironically is used by more than 60% of the population of the country who live in the rural areas. Thus most students are learning about a reality which does not and may never exist for them. Such choices are also an indication that while the majority of the black population lives in rural areas, their education is geared to the culture and economy of the towns.

The sign portrayed by the signified concept of a toilet by the woodwork teacher is that which is conventional and flushable. The rural type of toilets as presented to the students conjure images of the bad, substandard, and unacceptable. The teacher's defence, before a further teasing out of what he really meant, was that examinations only tested conventional knowledge so he did not want to waste students' time with 'irrelevant' stuff. Even if the teacher was not aware of EWP's non-discrimination of the rural from the urban centres, his teaching was contradicting the national curriculum policy which calls for "relating the school curriculum closely to the productive sector in Zimbabwe and in so doing, relating education to the world of work" (Curriculum Development Unit Plan 1986-1990:1).

In another government paper (Zimbabwe, 1986:22) it is stated that:

> Government has clearly identified the need to relate education closely to productive activities so that education, more particularly scientific and technical education, is based on the real problems facing Zimbabweans. From the beginning pupils learn to relate science and technology to solving the problems faced in real life and to ways of improving their lives.

Even though this is what government policy says, the conversations carried out in this study together with observations made during field visits to Taedza school reveal that in practice things are not happening as planned.

C. The Myth of Modernization

This brings us to the crucial signified myth of modernization which is depicted in both the said and the unsaid by the participants' meanings of education and development. Modernization, as this study found out, signifies the 'civilized', 'good', urban, aspired for and liberating from the drudgery of village life. When participants talked about development, the meaning coming through was that of 'modernization'. This also indicates a colonial hangover. Our colonial history tells us about the 'civilizing' mission of Missionaries and white settlers to Zimbabwe. This 'civilizing' task was of changing all that was African and 'barbaric'. To be civilized was to be 'modern' and like all that is European. Kanu (1994), talking about Sierra Leone, another formerly colonized West African country, asserts that we are a culture amidst the juggernaut of western modernity which presently threatens every non-western country.

In my first conversation with Bob, he defined development for Zimbabwe in terms of uplifting the standard of living of those in the rural areas who constitute more than 60% of the population. Bob's unsaid voice in his language of development could also mean modernization whereby the rural poor would afford conventional houses with water systems, would own radios, television sets, own cars and send their children to group A schools where the children of the rich elite go. Such an education would give their children

the opportunity to get white collar jobs in the 'modern' urban towns.

Teachers teaching with this development model in mind are teaching for what Riddell (1980:43) has called the "escape mentality". Education which reinforces this mentality is not seen as a means to enrich the lives of the local community: it is seen as the route out of the peasant existence, a route out of the African rural areas where the chances of finding productive employment are still next to zero. According to Riddell (1980:43), this becomes a vicious circle of "hopes and ambitions which for the majority, are incapable of being realized".

The myth of modernization is further supported by the World Bank-dictated Zimbabwean ESAP model which is essentially that of development by modernization. The World Bank is pumping money into the 'modernization' of Zimbabwe's urban industries. Once fully modernized it is hoped that the fruits of prosperous and highly modernized urban industries would 'trickle down' to the rural poor (Zimbabwe Development Plan 1990-1995).

The unsaid of development by policy makers, curriculum planners and educators who participated in this study is that of 'modernization' of the rural poor. The World Bank supported development agenda on the other hand, has urban industries as its starting point which would 'trickle down' to the rural black population. If these two are 'the' models of Zimbabwe's development, then the majority of Zimbabwe's population (rural) have a long way to go to enjoy the fruits of development or to participate in their development. In other words, development for the country's majority black population will remain highly elusive for some time to come.

This myth is in opposition to the original idea of the then new government in 1980 which submitted a position paper in 1982 in which it criticized the colonial education system and acknowledged that:

The Ministry of Education and Culture inherited a formal education system

> designed to prepare a minority group of students for external examinations. This system took no account of the rapidly developing problems of youth unemployment, the need for skilled manpower or the need for aligning the education system to meet the needs and aspirations of the masses, and did not in any way conform to national goals which would improve the lives of the vast majority of the people (p.12).

Has the above mismatch of aspirations and realities changed? What type of development pattern is the present education system supporting? These are important questions whose answers the study tried to elicit from the participants.

Relevant Development

There is consensus throughout the conversations from policy planners like Farai, and EWP educators like Jack, Bob and Fungai, that relevancy will be found in a purely Zimbabwean development model based on Zimbabwe's realities and possibilities and not imitations of models from developed countries. Farai criticized the lack of originality by saying, "... We have become too much influenced by the World Bank/IMF thinking and not enough is based on an analysis of our own situation."

The question which comes to mind in view of the above statement from Farai is one of how much of our own needs is reflected in our education system? As revealed by participants in this study, the answer is 'very little'. There is still a lot to be done not only in the education system of Zimbabwe, but also in the present development patterns in order to close the present mismatched gap between education and development.

The general consensus of the participants in this study agrees with the official statements of politicians of where future development has to come from (Mugabe, 1986; Banana, 1986 and Mutumbuka, 1986). Such a hope does not look very bright when we look at the interpretations of the teachers who feel constrained by examinations and lack of time. According to the teachers who participated in this study, there is no time left for anything else. Thus the deliberate link between school and the world of work for national

development, which EWP calls for, becomes a luxury which teachers at Taedza and other schools country-wide cannot afford. According to the woodwork teacher at Taedza school, the reason is simply because:

> Our lives as teachers and students tend to be very much affected by examinations. You cannot do what you want when what you are worried about is that the students should pass the 'O' Level examinations which they are expected to pass.

Farai, during our second conversation, had talked about her frustration as Minister in trying to pass a policy through cabinet to get rid of 'O' Level examinations since they were taking priority in education. According to Farai, the cabinet said no. If they had said yes then maybe schools in Zimbabwe could have been given the chance to teach for life after school rather than teach for pass marks as they presently do. The sign of the unsaid in this refusal to get rid of 'O' Level examinations, which were put in place by our British colonizers, is that Zimbabwe's policy makers and the society at large are still not decolonized enough "to form our own values of what is good education".

Albeit all the 'limiting situations' mentioned in this chapter, the language of most of the participants for this study is not that of despair but the language of hope. The signs of hope come out more from the conversations with Minister Farai. She used metaphors of child/growth whenever she was talking of Zimbabwe's education and development problems. We can use the other optimistic side of this metaphor which sees Zimbabwe as a child full of 'innocence' who needs 'nurturing'. She talks of 'young teenage industry' and 'growing pains'. "We will outgrow our problems like most teenagers who outgrow teenage problems," she concluded.

Military metaphors signifying hope are also found in the language of ZIMFEP educators. We find words like 'combating', 'enemy', 'attack' and 'arms'. The signified in these military metaphors is a determination to 'fight' on for a new Zimbabwe whose education and development strategies will cease to be imitations of colonial models. How

this 'new' nation will come about was suggested by Farai when she said that we will have to use our past, our present, and the universal experience to create our own.

D. Questioning Development

How developed or what level of development a country is, is usually measured on an international scale. This international measure equates development in terms of increasing the standard of living of a country as measured by indicators such as per-capita GNP (Karten, 1991). The measuring 'instruments' are based on developed countries' experiences and are taken to be the same for all countries. It is usually the case that such measures do not take into account the developing countries' rural poor who usually constitute the largest population of these countries. Such measurements do not take into account an individual country's needs or an individual country's attempts to make development more relevant. This is what we see happening to a country like Zimbabwe.

Worsley (1991), in his book The Three Worlds : Culture and World Development, identified the following characteristics of international development:

1. Growth centred vision.
2. Increased economic output.
3. Top-down, expert driven model - conceived by people from outside of the community who will not be directly affected by the decisions made.
4. A large scale of funds for 'development' from donor agencies are targeted at industrializing the urban locations the benefits of which would 'trickle down' to the poorer or rural people (the Trickle Down Theory).
5. Development assistance is designed to help make the country an attractive investment site for transnational companies.
6. Culture and social realities of individual countries are not considered in planning development programs.

Unfortunately, all the above are true of the development models in place in Zimbabwe. How has this affected or is being affected by EWP in Zimbabwe? What are the possibilities of EWP when surrounded by such development models? These are supplementary questions which this chapter also addresses.

In one of our conversations, Minister Farai mentioned that she was concerned about the fact that development plans in Zimbabwe are more and more becoming an abstract academic exercise divorced from the total realities of our country. One can assume that this abstractness in development planning is a result of wanting to fit into international development 'trends'. Unfortunately such development blunders are usually extended to things like education curriculum reforms which are intimately related to global competitiveness. According to Worsley (1991) one can even apply the same list of characteristics of international development to education and come up with an analytical framework for education similar to that for international development. Worsley drew up a list of characteristics of education which parallels those for international development. The list includes:

- Growth centred vision.
- Increased output centred.
- Top down and expert driven.
- Urban or mega projects centred.
- Shift in focus from local needs to needs of transnational corporations, and
- Ignoring the local content.

E. EWP Objectives versus International Development Models

The study visits made to Taedza school sought to find out more about EWP and development from the implementers' position. The three pillars were used as the framework for investigating the extent to which EWP conceptions and practices at Taedza

school were attuned to national development. Classroom observations, documents analyses and conversations with teachers, students, and non-teaching staff were relied upon to provide evidence of this attunement/non-attunement to national development needs or ideals.

Pillar #1, Economic

In the preceding chapter it was noted that EWP has been popularized in developing and socialist countries for its alleged economic salvation (Nhundu, 1991; Lauglo and Lillis, 1988; Fuller, 1986 and Coombs, 1968). Zimbabwe is no exception to this ideal.

At the time of its inception, the Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP), was given the responsibility to:

1) promote socialist values and attitudes in pupils,
2) assist in mental de-colonization of the learner,
3) overcome the hiatus between mental and manual work, theory and practice and class work and real life situations,
4) work towards the reduction of the education budget by making schools self-reliant,
5) curb urban migration of unemployed school leavers,
6) develop attitudes favourable to agricultural production, and
7) supply the economy with worker intellectuals with a strong bias towards industrial and technical skills (ZIMFEP, 1984).

From the above list it is clear that most objectives (4,5,6,7) emphasize the economic role that EWP was supposed to fulfil. The then new government of an independent Zimbabwe could have had good intentions in establishing an EWP organization to help create wealth for the schools and the country but, as Farai pointed out, "we became too much influenced by the World Bank and IMF thinking and not enough based on the

analyses of our own situation." Such contradiction between wanting to pursue national indigenous models of EWP yet being controlled by external demands is making EWP implementation a dilemma as teachers are forced to choose between local or international curriculum demands.

Instead of achieving these economic development goals in a relevant and locally determined way, EWP in Zimbabwe found itself having to deal with World Bank and IMF imposed economic development strategies. Whereas EWP sought to respond to local community economic needs by making students work while they learn and learn while they work, thereby balancing mental and manual work, theory and practice, class work and real work situations, the World Bank was calling for academic rationalism. The Bank was arguing that EWP curriculum promoted production skills and attitudes at the expense of academic skills which, accordingly, require less funding and yet better prepares students for adult life than EWP curriculum. Such students, the Bank further argued, are more likely to find jobs and because of their broader training, more able to change jobs more successfully and to learn new tasks that they may be asked to perform (World Bank, 1990).

Samoff (1992) correctly observed that the World Bank has come to be the leading agency in setting the education and development agendas in many developing countries. Development programs of countries seeking financial support are forced to be responsive to the agenda and preferences of the funding agencies. The funding agency makes the provision of support conditional on the adoption of specific policies and priorities (Mbeo, 1994; Samoff, 1992 and Chung, 1991). Such development programs would be preoccupied with economic growth, increased output and making the country attractive to investors.

In the case of education, while Zimbabwe's EWP educators see the merit of producing skilled school leavers who are productive and can better handle the ever

increasing unemployment by being self-employed, the World Bank development strategists are advising for growth-centred development which has no consideration for the individual student's future.

Ironically, the World Bank/IMF conditions for the 'development' of Zimbabwe are making such an individual school leaver face more unemployment, retrenchment, and rising costs of living. In actual fact the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) is making the common person have more rather than fewer problems in Zimbabwe. The politicians and economic planners are saying 'suffer now for tomorrow you will be happy', how near that tomorrow will come, nobody is saying.

The thrust of the World Bank is to create conditions that create economic growth, such as market liberalization strategies that attract foreign investors, while the thrust of EWP is the empowerment of students through the acquisition of productive skills and attitudes which promote self-employment through the formation of collective cooperative ventures by school leavers. EWP philosophy involves preparing students to play an active role in employment creation and generation of wealth while still at school, while the World Bank sees the role of students as passively waiting for government to create economic conditions which generate jobs which students can then take up after school. Since schools are not expected to prepare students for specific vocations or job creation roles as envisioned under EWP curriculum approaches, a good curriculum or education should cost government very little. This puts the economic rationale or pillar of EWP in direct conflict with Zimbabwe's World Bank-dictated development model.

While EWP educators in Zimbabwe are striving to appropriately make education respond to the economic demands of the people by calling for a balance between academic and productive work, its main donor, the World Bank, is discouraging such a link by not funding these initiatives. Thus, in view of these contrasting philosophies and practices of the World Bank and EWP, Bob's earlier observation carries some substance. In his

analysis of World Bank funding strategies for education in Zimbabwe, Bob argued that:

> We are aware that the developed countries never wanted the underdeveloped countries to control their own economies. This I think is one of the reasons why the World Bank refused to support us with funds for equipment when the government wanted to introduce technical subjects in all schools. You hear them say that they want us to be self-sufficient. By that they don't mean empowering us to control our economies. They always find ways of making us dependent on them.

Fungai also made a similar observation when he was cautioning against donor funds dependency syndrome in the implementation of EWP in ZIMFEP schools. According to Fungai:

> Who calls the shots? Donors dictate what to do with their money... When you want to give a loan they say give a grant. When you want to give a grant they say loan... it's high time we move away from this donor dependency syndrome because any program which depends on donor aid is doomed to failure. So many NGOs have failed because of this.

The questions which have to be asked are: How are the policy makers ensuring the success of EWP within the framework of this World Bank/IMF instituted Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP)? How serious can they be within such contradictions of intentions? How much success can an NGO like ZIMFEP enjoy when the whole social fabric is ESAP controlled? Such are the questions which we have to probe as we grow in strength in order for us to make development indigenous and not international.

EWP pillar #2, Pedagogical

One of the key requirements of EWP as mentioned in the previous chapter is that students must learn academic theory and use the knowledge to produce marketable things and also be able to solve their everyday life problems. Pedagogy is linked to the economy by making the curriculum relevant to national development needs and by increasing the practical usefulness of what is taught to students. How is this practical usefulness being

fulfilled at Taedza school? This is another question which this chapter explores.

The conversations and classroom observations which I had at Taedza school revealed that the usefulness of what was being taught at this school is questionable. It becomes questionable because of the way that learning material is presented. The learning and teaching materials are made to satisfy examination requirements first before anything else. A good example comes from the conversation with the woodwork teacher who said:

> Even if they [students] are prepared to discuss their type of toilets, I would not allow them to design their own type of toilet paper holder because everybody would end up doing their own thing. I don't have time for that and the syllabus and examinations ask only about the conventional modern things.

Maybe if there was no examination fever or if examinations were flexible, the woodwork teacher could have let the students discuss and make toilet paper holders ideal for whatever type of toilet they have at home. Such a student who can make functional items for his/her specific home as well as for any other home would be a better student than the one who is only able to make conventional items and pass the woodwork examination.

F. The Role of the Teacher in National Development

In one of our conversations, Magaya, the participant from the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), talked about the need for clarity of intention if pedagogical innovations like EWP are to succeed. He said, "They have never given us a syllabus which could e.g. specify their [ZIMFEP] objectives of EWP and how it could be implemented. The concept is a good one if it is properly managed and explained." Magaya's assumption may not hold when there is no clarity at national planning level of what kind of education fits into current development strategies and how such an education system is to be sustained. Such clarity is necessary to inform and guide teacher education programs because for EWP to be successfully implemented, there is need for a new cadre

of teachers pre-disposed to EWP.

EWP needs more time, effort, dedication and commitment on the part of the teacher. This observation makes it necessary to establish not only economic but other conditions and contexts which raise teachers' status and morale and, thus, promote their interests and motivation to produce the 'worker intellectual' who is much talked about in ZIMFEP. It is therefore the teacher, and not money alone, who is the most decisive factor in attaining EWP goals. As Hersh (1982:9) puts it, "the conditions for effective schooling are in our control, that more than money, it is a will for excellence that may best serve as the catalyst for school improvement."

In the case of Zimbabwe, this study found that the ideal EWP teacher just remains an *ideal* partly because of the international development determinants currently followed in the country. As was mentioned in this chapter, curriculum development based on international development is based on a growth centred vision as well as increased output. Student growth is equated with passing examinations. The meaning of growth as required under EWP, that of producing a productive and useful person to society, is lost while the teacher is concentrating on passing students.

Almost all the teachers who participated in this study mentioned the passing of 'O' Level examinations as their primary goal in teaching. For this we cannot only blame foreign influence like the World Bank, and other imported development models, but local policy makers and the Zimbabwean society as a whole. Given Minister Farai's comments, it could be argued, rightly, that the local bureaucrats and politicians in Zimbabwe support the current examination-centred education system partly because most of them still believe in and enjoy elitism. Farai alluded to this resistance to change when she pointed out that:

> In 1982, 1985 and 1991 the Ministry of Education's Review Committee tried to pass a policy through cabinet to say that we don't have to have 'O' Level examinations [the British inherited examination system of education], but we could not get it passed. They said no, every kid must have 'O' Levels... We are having

> a crisis of values. If we were to ask who won the war we may say the Rhodesians won because their values won. We are still following their values... We should be able to form our own values about what is good education.

Bob, in one of our conversations, has also accused the bureaucrats of trying to safeguard what he called their 'compradore bourgeoisie status' which they have enjoyed since colonialism. Such resistance to change, cited by both Farai and Bob, become problematic if we look at the resultant educational objectives supported by the predominant development ideals.

The conversations in the previous chapter suggest that two models of development coexist in Zimbabwe. The first is the growth and increased output centred model which can be equated with international development. The other is the EWP-focussed learner empowerment model. This is based on a belief of starting with the development of the learner as an all rounded person who, in turn, has the development of his/her community and nation at heart.

In the first model, classroom knowledge is often treated as being 'out there'. According to Giroux (1979:2), under this model education treats knowledge as:

> external body of information, the production of which appears to be independent of human beings. From this perspective, objective knowledge is viewed as independent of time and place: it becomes universalized ahistoric knowledge. Moreover it is expressed in a language that is basically technical and allegedly value free. This language is instrumental and defines knowledge in terms which are empirically verifiable and suited to finding the best possible means for goals that go unquestioned. Knowledge, then, becomes not only countable and measurable, it also becomes impersonal. Teaching in this pedagogical paradigm is usually discipline based and treats subject matter in a compartmentalized and atomized fashion.

Proof of the acquisition of knowledge is, in this regard, through examination marks. This western type of education has come under increasing criticism by newly post-independent states and EWP educationists. They argue that it does not offer the requisite knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will make learners lead productive lives in

society. Both the curriculum and goals of western models of education have also been criticized for their lack of relevance. Curriculum input is seen as too academic and elitist and of no practical use (Nhundu, 1992 and Collins and Gillespie, 1983).

Western-type education is, contrary to expectations and criticisms, largely what is happening in almost all of the schools in Zimbabwe, including Taedza, an EWP school which is expected to follow the second model of education which empowers students. What is also very disappointing is that the teachers are aware of what they are teaching and criticize their ways of teaching but feel that there is nothing they can do about it. Three of the five teachers I observed teaching at Taedza school, and with whom I later held conversations, knew how to replace the way they had taught the lessons I had observed them teach with methods which were more conducive to EWP. The reasons which they gave for not following the demands of EWP were mostly structural and had to do with passing of examinations. Some of the reasons given were lack of time, long syllabuses, large classes and other structural impediments. For example, the geography teacher had this to say:

> The syllabus is very long so that one has to race against time in order to finish it before examinations. If we don't finish the syllabus in time for examinations then we have problems.

The mathematics teacher, on the other hand, said that, "We don't have time for all that. We just want to finish the syllabus and hope that the students will pass" while the woodwork teacher said, "The only extra time we have is weekends but one would like to rest on these days." Finally, the science teacher defended the method he used as being appropriate for the structural conditions under which they were working, "You just want to use a method which is not time consuming in terms of the syllabus."

From the foregoing we can conclude that the major purpose of teaching has become that of passing the examinations and not to provide students with relevant skills and

knowledge as is demanded by EWP. The teachers I observed at Taedza school mostly used the banking approach and taught examinable knowledge which may not necessarily be useful in the student's life at or after school, especially when we consider that most will end up unemployed. Jack, the administrator from ZIMFEP, accused the Taedza school teachers of being pre-occupied with examinations, "What exams demand they do, but what EWP demands they don't," he said.

This observation shows a different analysis of problems reflecting the levels occupied by participants in the organization. Thus, from the point of view of an administrator away from the school, Jack was probably right. However, he failed to recognize other more pressing and mundane issues which teachers in the field were experiencing. For the teachers, as change agents, these were real implementation problems that prevented them from implementing EWP practices. These issues need to be looked at in order to understand what is going on at Taedza school. As this research found out at Taedza school, examinations are what compels teachers to focus their efforts to expeditiously cover curriculum content which is most likely to be examined. But since teachers claimed that classes were large and syllabuses too long and overcrowded with too many topics to be covered in too little time, they felt compelled to address these topics using the fastest teaching methods available and this meant rote teaching and learning methods. Unfortunately, their problems are not appreciated or, at most, not known to ZIMFEP personnel so that they end up being criticized by people who should be providing them with support.

Selection of topics, I was told, was not done based on their usefulness but on how likely the topic was to be asked in exams. Teachers confessed to studying examination papers of past years to determine questions which were most likely to be asked. This is something I was very familiar with because I had also done it during my student as well as teaching days. We were learning and teaching by trend analysis of past papers. Such

learning and teaching, I think, end up having nothing to do with development, be it the development of the individual student, the school or the nation.

Pisai (psuedonym), a fellow student at the University of Alberta who is currently on study leave from the Examinations Branch of the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Zimbabwe, told me that teaching by model answers from past examination papers is being worsened by the MOE's and private publishing houses's publication and selling of past examination papers. Even textbooks produced by both the MOE and other publishing houses include past examination samples and specimen questions and answers. According to Pisai, the MOE is now faced with the problem of model answer methods of teaching whereby model answers are drilled into students who in turn learn nothing more than memorizing knowledge without any regard to understanding what is taught.

Mbeo (1994:164), cited similar experiences in Tanzania. He reports: "Pupils merely achieved the ability to memorize discrete facts with very minimal or no effort to think and regurgitate them upon signal." Thus, examinations cease to be a feedback for improvement as they should be, but become a judging mechanism. This becomes true in all cases where examinations are used as the gateway to success.

One would want to question teacher education programs in relation to these teaching trends. For example, are teachers being adequately prepared to teach for purposes other than examinations? As the conversations for this study revealed, most of the teachers, especially those from technical teachers' colleges, were well exposed to appropriate teaching techniques for EWP but did not use these methods because of the given position they found themselves in. They were not being challenged enough to explore the possible or the given position (Britzman, 1992).

Even if teacher education programs lacked exposure to EWP, as revealed by teachers who were not from technical teachers' colleges, ZIMFEP and the local school administration are supposed to develop their teachers to meet the needs and expectations of

EWP. The exposure made by school headmaster Dzidzai, after considerable probing, shows that his school did not provide teachers with this orientation.

Rewarding Wrong Pedagogical Achievement

This study found out that the teaching at Taedza school also suffers because the teachers are not rewarded for that extra commitment which EWP demands. Teachers are rewarded on the basis of student passes. The geography teacher posed the problem succinctly when he said:

> If you try to make your lessons more practical to what affects the lives of the children you run the risk of not finishing the syllabus. Yet one has to finish the whole syllabus since you don't know which topics would be examined. And if you don't, when the results are out people don't consider the practicability of your teaching. People are not worried about this production of a whole person we are talking about. What they are after is how many of your students passed... Right away we cannot say that a person who is very good at the practical side would be recognized because what is most important to people are how many 'A's they get. We never say how good was he in terms of writing a story and such things. You see, this is never tested.

In fact it is for this reason that school administrators in EWP pilot schools are tempted to neglect or turn a blind eye to EWP oriented activities because the performance of the school is still being judged purely on academic standards (Nhundu, 1992 and Mudenge, 1984). Students, as the Taedza school geography teacher reported, were not evaluated on the basis of the acquisition of practical skills and their ability to relate theory to practice. Neither are they assessed on such broad but desirable EWP characteristics as innovativeness, cooperation, leadership success and the development of attitudes relevant to the successful implementation of EWP.

What the geography teacher was talking about is what government bureaucrats and funding agencies like the World Bank want a recipient country's education system to be. For the international development model, relevant knowledge is instrumental and not

functional. What works must be specified in explicit and quantitative terms. Funding agencies, as was argued before, influence the thinking of intellectuals and policy makers of the recipient countries. This is some form of neo-colonialism which Samoff (1992:61) calls the "financial-intellectual complex of foreign aid".

G. The Top Down Approach to Education

One of the contributions to the problems being faced in the implementation of EWP in Zimbabwe, as this study found out, is the failure to involve the teachers in policy decisions which affect them and their students. The curriculum development model in operation in all schools in Zimbabwe is 'top down and expert driven'.

A typical day at Taedza school which I observed during my study visits was rigidly structured and full of mechanistic tasks, excessive teacher talk and all the 'banking' methods of teaching. This, as reported earlier in this chapter, made the teaching dull and mostly useless. The situation is made worse by the fact that these rigid timetables and syllabi content were prescribed by the MOE. Schools in such a case become mere implementers of the installed curriculum and timetables, both of which they are never involved in their planning. They were also required to follow them to the letter for examinations purposes. With such highly programmed and fixed curriculum and timetables, it makes it difficult to adopt a climate conducive to EWP teaching and learning. Such a climate largely requires flexibility and freedom to adopt and adapt, to create, to try out and to reflect.

If EWP is to succeed, the teacher should also be made an active participant in curriculum decision making and implementation. It is the teacher,and not the policymaker, who is in the best position to decide the best way to impart EWP knowledge and skills, utilize available resources, create more resources and find effective ways of communicating and interacting with the students. It, therefore, becomes crucial to empower teachers and

give them the support they need so that they become aware that the EWP program is theirs. Such teachers would be able to make their own initiatives and decisions without waiting for people from the MOE and ZIMFEP to tell them what to do and how to do it, something which is happening now at Taedza school.

EWP pillar #3 : Socio-political Objectives

Literature on EWP reveals that the social benefits of combining education with work are closely linked with economic and pedagogical benefits and, together, they form or fulfil a nation's development ideals. The totality of EWP as a comprehensive social process finds meaning in van Rensburg (1977:352) who embraces EWP as an educational process involving "...an acceptance of the (Marxist) thesis that education is always a total social process in which the organization and control of production and the uses of technology are fundamental sources of group and individual consciousness."

The school, according to this argument, cannot be socially and economically independent of its environment. If the economic environment is externally driven and supported by inappropriate technology which does not reflect local needs and conditions, then the type of consciousness nurtured by such an environment is equally inappropriate.

During the early years of Zimbabwe's independence, EWP was seen as a way of developing a different type of people through passing on desired liberating values and attitudes. Such values and attitudes included the inculcating of respect for labour and thus redress the shortcomings of colonial education which revered academic tradition while looking down upon manual work.

Bob, in one of our conversations, also supported this claim that EWP can pass on these useful norms and values through "involving our children on meaningful productive labour. Through telling the students again and again that wealth is created through production" while working together in Production Units and co-operatives inculcates a

team spirit would be inculcated in learners as opposed to the colonial values of individualism.

This, we see being portrayed in ZIMFEP objectives such as mental decolonization of the learner, overcoming the hiatus between mental and manual work, bridging the gap between theory and practice, and development of attitudes favourable to agricultural production. With such objectives in mind, it was intended that EWP will produce an 'all round person' who would be functional in society regardless of whether s/he passes or fails in an examination. Such people would fit into any society they found themselves in, rural or urban. This would in turn curb urban migration. Such assumptions were theoretically sound but practically we have to pose the question which Minister Farai asked in one of our conversations: "What did we do to make this theory practical?" One might also add: What are the constraints which are slowing down these dreams?

The first problem arose out of the intricate link between education and political ideology. At independence in 1980, the new government of Zimbabwe declared itself socialist. This was the spirit in which EWP schools were established; to experiment with a socialist model of education which would in turn help in changing the prevailing colonial and capitalist development models. EWP schools were to promote socialist values and attitudes in children which were intended to help create equality and a classless society (Nhundu, 1992).

The colonially fashioned bureaucrats who occupied positions of authority in the government saw this as a threat to themselves and their positions. A socialist education was something new which could mean bringing in new people with the necessary dispensation who could replace them from their privileged positions. Jack made a similar observation in one of our conversations in which he stated that what had put these bureaucrats in their positions of authority was their type of education which had become incompatible with the new educational thinking under EWP, "we are telling them that their

education was not good and yet they thought themselves experts". When the bureaucrats perceived this threat, they started resisting change and adopting strategies that hindered the smooth implementation of EWP in ZIMFEP pilot schools.

According to the then Minister of Education and Culture, Mutumbuka, these bureaucrats were fighting change. In exasperation, Mutumbuka (1985:3) cautioned that:

> We have had cases, for instance, of education officers who visit schools and discourage the teaching of practical subjects, quoting outmoded rules and regulations which inhibit flexibility in timetabling. We have staff officers who deliberately remove ex-combatant teachers from EWP schools in order to minimize their political influence.

Mutumbuka's warning had very little effect mostly because these ruling elites had the structural power to influence change or discourage it. For example, although ZIMFEP was given the responsibility to implement EWP in pilot schools, it was not given the autonomy and independence to be completely free of bureaucratic constraints of the MOE. ZIMFEP had no power to hire or fire personnel in its pilot schools. As a result ZIMFEP has been unable to retain its ex-combatant teachers who had been trained in exile during the war. These teachers' training programs involved ideological re-orientation, attitudinal changes, productive skills acquisition, theory and practice of EWP, as well as self-reliance, pedagogical and problem solving teaching strategies (Nhundu, 1992; ZIMFEP, 1986 and Mutumbuka, 1984).

The above virtues, however, were not recognized by the Ministry of Education for remuneration or promotion purposes. The ex-combatant teachers were subsequently 'retrained' and re-deployed to other schools and replaced with conventionally trained teachers as part of what Nhundu (1992) has called the "normalization" of pilot schools. Teachers who replaced the ex-combatants were not only trained to teach an academically oriented curriculum, but soon found it difficult to operate effectively and implement EWP. Nhundu has also reported that some heads of schools and teachers openly discouraged the

teaching of EWP in pilot schools. ZIMFEP, on the other hand, could not do much about it since they could not recruit, appoint and retain teachers and heads of schools who were predisposed to EWP.

As the independence euphoria began to settle down, reality forced the Zimbabwe government to change its socialist ideological position to a 'pragmatic' one. By the early 1990s the government of Zimbabwe completely abandoned its pursuit of socialism as a national ideology. Mugabe conceded this ideological shift when he reportedly said that "We decided to mix socialism with a capitalist thrust. We made sure the two will co-exist by adopting the co-operatives systems" (The "Sunday Mail", 12 December 1993).

As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, education and development are intrinsically linked with ideology. How then does EWP survive these ideological shifts? During our conversations, Jack and Bob (both from ZIMFEP secretariat) said that they believe that ideological shifts should not affect ZIMFEP's operations as long as the programs are able to show people that EWP works. According to Bob:

> The concept of EWP may be seen as socialist but as an organization we are aware of the necessity to arm Zimbabweans with the necessary education to control their own economy. That, whether its capitalism or socialist, is immaterial.

The findings of this study suggest that Bob's dream of 'controlling our own economy' may be receding because of the World Bank's Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) for Zimbabwe. ESAP, as reported by several participants in this study, is changing Zimbabwe's development strategies from people oriented as pledged at independence in 1980, to foreign investment oriented. Development planning within ESAP, as we have seen, has largely become a top-down, foreign-experts-driven process. This is all being done in the name of attracting investment from transnational companies while neglecting local community needs.

In this development model, if the transnationals invest heavily then the formal

economic sector will be industrialized and the benefits would 'trickle down' to the poorer people in the society (Coombs, 1968 and Rogers, 1962). This assumption of transfer of modernization from developed countries through transnationals is directly encouraging the provision of irrelevant education which is alienating teachers and students from the mainstream of their economic, political and social development.

It can also be argued that this over reliance on foreign experts is bringing back a 'culture of silence' which is something which we were fighting against when we fought colonialism. Freire (1985) talks of the poor's 'culture of silence' -- a silence lacking any critical response to events enacted in their name. The top-down, expert-led development model provides a framework that promotes the culture of silence.

Freire (1985) interprets change in terms of hope and the involvement and participation in decision making of those most affected by it. The ESAP-influenced economic development models being followed by the government of Zimbabwe are not encouraging the participation which Freire is calling for.

Howard (1982:93) sums up this debate eloquently by saying:

> Imagine that a social [development] problem was to be conceived, for all rational purposes, as simply a species of technical problem. In that case, only experts could rationally discuss it, and even in their own individual cases, only their expertise and not their personality or their values would make a positive contribution to the discussion. What, after such a discussion, would be left for the mass of the citizens who are not experts in this field? Only passive acceptance, submission, some thinly disguised program of indoctrination. In such a society, democracy, seen as an ideal of consensus, achieved through free discussion of all, would be finished.

Thus for there to be meaningful implementation of development education, teachers, parents, and all the other stakeholders have to be involved right from the beginning of the decision making process. The same can be argued for meaningful implementation of other development programs like economic and social ones. The involvement of the people to be affected by such policies becomes very crucial if the people

are to accept them as their own and help in their success.

Chapter VI.

EXPLORING TRANSFORMATIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR EWP IN ZIMBABWE

Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage. It cannot fear the analysis of reality, or, under pain of revealing itself as a farce, avoid creative discussion.
-Paulo Freire-

A. Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to explore possibilities of coming out of the caughtness of Zimbabwe in international development models which is presenting a dilemma for the implementation of EWP. This exploration is made using insights from what the conversations in this study revealed together with my personal reflections as informed by my experiences, vision and understandings of EWP and issues of education and national development. In addition, critical theory, especially Paulo Freire's contributions, is also used to provide supplemental insights for this chapter because of the revolutionary background of Zimbabwe's experiences and the role which his work played in shaping educational experiences of those in exile during that period.

Since current EWP practices fit into the analytical framework for liberation education, more especially because of the historical context of its genesis and the liberating nature of some of its major objectives such as achieving mental decolonization of the learner, bridging the gap between mental and manual work, and promoting self-reliant attitudes and values in learners, Freire's work is on liberation education was of particular importance in the early development of EWP. And since EWP evolved out of the experiences of people in camp schools where they were engaged in the struggle to liberate

themselves from oppressive social, economic and political colonial systems, some of the aspirations of people in the camp schools in exile found their expression through the liberating nature of Freire's liberation education.

However, this chapter begins by providing a brief historical background of pre-independence colonial conditions which precipitated the liberation war and forced thousands of people into exile where EWP was initiated. This is done in order to show the context and situatedness of the founders of Zimbabwe's EWP. It is within this context that the influence of Freire's work on the schools in exile is explored and the Zimbabwean ideologies and educational theories which agreed with those of Paulo Freire are examined. A further purpose of this brief historical background is to help create an appreciation of the possibilities available for EWP to emerge out of the current implementation impasse imposed on it due to Zimbabwe's caughtness to international development models.

Finally, the chapter examines my own commitment to the improvement of EWP and its role in personal and national development in Zimbabwe. I look at this objective situation from my subjective position of a woman who was 'locked in' with the development and propagation of EWP but has now been afforded a chance to distance herself and critically reflect on EWP.

B. Pre-Independence Developments

Pre-independence developments dealt with in this section concern the political conditions which blacks endured following the declaration of independence from Britain by a white minority settler government led by Ian Smith in 1965. While this political watershed in the history of Zimbabwe did not constitute the only reason why blacks took up arms to fight for Zimbabwe's independence, it is the most significant brutal development that incensed African nationalists and provided them with the motive power to go into exile and launch a guerilla war. It was while we were in exile that EWP was

conceived and developed from our colonial and war experiences together with ideas borrowed from critical theory, especially Paulo Freire's work.

Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) and the Liberation War

Zimbabwe, like many other African countries, went through a protracted colonial experience. The situation for the blacks in the country changed when Britain decided to grant independence to its colonies. The white population in the then Rhodesia refused to grant independence to blacks and declared what was known as Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). UDI worsened the situation for the black majority in that, whereas the blacks had opportunities to complain to Britain if the ruling white minority was becoming more and more discriminatory and cruel that avenue was now closed. It was the local whites, and only them, who could decide everything for the black population. Hence, following UDI the colonial government brutalized the Africans using a governing style that Freire (1993:170) would characterize as reflecting:

> psychological violence while profiling blacks as subhumans, almost animal-like creatures. In fact, it is safe [true] to say that, in some cases, [all cases], domestic pests received better treatment by the [white] society than the unprotected, subordinated blacks.

Segregation worsened. All the fertile land was taken away from the blacks who were driven to infertile reserves where they were given no access to education, except for a very small number who were allowed into the few schools set aside for blacks. Blacks were required to pay school fees in contrast to free and compulsory education for the whites (Zvobgo, 1984; Dorsey, 1981 and Riddell, 1977). These few educated blacks were used for helping the white rulers rule. They became the selected black elite of the civil service. At this point education served the purpose of creating a selected group of urban black elites which could, according to Fanon (1967), blindly support the colonizers'

project: 'a black-skin, white-mask petty bourgeoisie'. In this chapter it will be argued that, in Zimbabwe, such an elite is both resistant and antagonistic to change in the form of EWP and has become an obstacle to the implementation of EWP.

The blacks organized themselves to get independence for themselves through guerrilla warfare. They had become tired of being what Fanon (1967) called 'the wretched of the earth', or being beings of others, and now wanted to be beings of themselves. This transformation entailed changing political and social conditions and conditions of material existence such as ownership and control of labour.

Freire has said freedom means unmasking the social and cultural mechanism of power as a basis for engagement in emancipating action. The blacks in the then Rhodesia were struggling against white/black power relations and privileges, as they had unmasked them through their own politicization. They had also realized that unequal power relations needed to be struggled against in order to construct a more equitable and just society. The black people's realization and hatred of such a society ignited a fire that inspired them to make the ultimate sacrifice; a willingness to offer their lives for the freedom of the rest of the black population. According to McLaren and da Silva (1993:83), this momentous wind of change which ignited the blacks' aspirations and will power translated into"... a fire whose flames of transformation invite us to take Brecht's hammer and to forge on liberation's anvil ... and create freer, more equitable spaces for living."

The war of resistance resulted in many young men and women leaving the country to fight from neighbouring countries. Many children of school-going age, some of whom had been orphaned by the war, crossed into neighbouring Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia to join the war effort and swell the ranks of the guerillas. On arrival, children of school going age and those too young to join the guerilla army, were placed in several camp schools where they continued their education.

Conditions in these camps were harsh and compelled teachers and their students to

build shelter and produce food for their survival. These conditions of severe want gave impetus to what later became known as EWP (Nhundu, forthcoming). Thus, what started as a battle for survival in the camps, through attempts by school children and their teachers to fend for themselves by engaging in productive activities such as agricultural production, construction, leather work and sewing, was gradually developed into a comprehensive education system (EWP) well grounded in the broader socialist philosophy pursued by the liberation movements and supported by Freirean and other critical theorists.

Freire's Influence in Camp School Curriculum

After six camp schools were established in Mozambique, the next task was to formulate teaching ideologies suitable for our situation. A number of Freire's theories were found to be in resonance with the ideological formulations of camp schools. One influential teaching of Freire (1993:38) which postulates that "reality must be perceived as constantly evolving rather than a static entity; as being created rather than immutable: as something to be made rather than accommodated" became pivotal in understanding the praxis of our conditions. When used to analyze our situation, Freire's postulate made us understand that colonialism or white apartheid rule was not 'given' to be unquestionably accepted, suffered and adopted as white supremacists were advocating. This is why the black population in Zimbabwe took up arms to fight the oppression of white rule. We believed that culture is a human creation, hence it could be humanly changed. This position of Freire was in resonance with our situation because we had realized that we had to fight colonial rule.

It was in education that Freire's influence was most profound, especially in ZANU camp schools in Mozambique. These schools directly borrowed from Freire for many aspects of their classroom methodology. Initially, we were faced with an acute shortage of trained teachers in the camp schools before ZANU opened its own teacher education

college. A few who had previously been trained in Rhodesia had to be retrained through a de-briefing process that attuned them for teaching in camp schools under revolutionary conditions and a new educational system. The training and retraining of both new and old teachers also involved exposition of the work of Freire and other critical theorists.

Thus from the outset ZANU's teacher training orientation and education programs rejected the 'banking' approach to education which we had been exposed to at home. It was believed that both students and teachers had something to contribute to the education process contrary to the banking approach:

> ... in which narrating teachers deposit information into the minds of passive receiving students. It assumes that knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing... Banking education is invaluable for maintaining an oppressive social order, for the more the students put their effort into receiving and restoring information deposited into them, the less they attain any critical consciousness that comes from intervening in reality as makers and transformers of the world (Freire, 1972:46-7).

The approach to educating which denies 'banking' was found suitable for the new education system because we believed that both teachers and students were partners in pursuit of knowledge and truth in a learning process. The two become jointly responsible for a process in which there is mutual growth and development.

Freire's key words in his work also became catchwords for us and were of great influence to us as we went about planning our curriculum in the schools in exile. Words like 'domestication', 'humanization', 'subjecthood', 'oppression', 'liberation', 'dehumanization', 'objecthood', 'freedom', 'conscientize' and 'praxis' influenced the new education system considerably. We believed, as Paulo Freire did, that teaching was either an act of oppression which treats students as mere objects or it is a 'cultural action for freedom' whereby persons collectively pursue and affirm their subjecthood. According to Paulo Freire, education cannot be neutral; it either serves as an instrument for liberation or

domestication. Thus, the new educational system we were developing in our camp schools was not only in resonance with, but was also informed by, critical theory, especially Freire's work.

Instead of 'banking' education which domesticates students and which we had rejected when we ran away from Rhodesia, our educational ideas in the schools in exile found new meaning in Freire's problem-posing approach. According to this approach, "the teacher is no longer merely the one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn, while being taught, also teaches" (Freire, 1975:67). Through this approach Freire believes that no genuine learning can occur unless students are actively involved, through 'praxis', in controlling their own education. The concept of praxis became one of the key catchwords we adopted in the camp schools in Mozambique. It reflected the dialectical ways of thinking which ZANU emphasized in its Marxist-Leninist teachings during political lessons in the camps and throughout the mass mobilization process in contested and liberated zones in Rhodesia.

According to Freire, praxis is a dialectical unity of reflection and action. It is not blind action deprived of intention or finality. Nhundu (forthcoming) further expounds on praxis by arguing that:

> As informed reflection, praxis helps students assimilate knowledge according to his/her own needs rather than rote learning and the teacher helping the learner to become a subject of his/her own education rather than an object of systems of agenda.

Instead of rote learning through the 'banking' method of colonial education, we adopted another teaching approach from Freire; dialogical ways of teaching whereby teachers and students were all teaching and learning together. Both teachers and students were always engaged in dialogue rather than the teacher talking alone all the time. The type of dialogue adopted from Freire and which had proved to work was one which was

characterized by a 'horizontal relationship'. Students could question or even challenge their teachers and together they would work out the correct answers or situations.

This approach was particularly useful because of our background. Everyone in the camps had run away from educational, economic, social and cultural oppression because we could no longer stand the 'culture of silence'. We had run away in search of 'voices' so that we could express ourselves and once again become our own people as we had been before the setting in of colonialism. This applied to everybody including teachers, students and senior education officers in our schools. We had gotten away from oppression with the hope of liberating the nation, but felt we had to liberate ourselves first before we could liberate the nation. We therefore believed that we all had a role to play in the process of liberating ourselves, mentally and culturally, through sharing and reflecting our lived experiences. We believed in the power of education in liberating us much in the same way that Freire and other critical theorists had conceptualized it.

The situation in which we found ourselves is explained in Freirean terms by West (1993:xiii) when he says that:

> Freire's democratic dialogue [which] is attuned to the concrete operations of power and grounded in the painful yet empowering process of conscientization. This process embraces a critical demystifying moment in which structures of domination are laid bare and political engagement is imperative. This unique fusion of social theory, moral outrage and political praxis constitutes a kind of pedagogical politics of conversion in which objects of history constitute themselves as active subjects of history ready to make fundamental difference in the quality of the lives they individually and collectively live.

What Freire means in the case of Zimbabwe is that we need to trace our problems from our history and the power relations which shape that history. In terms of the problems being experienced with the implementation of EWP, we need to look at the problems with a view to finding possible ways to solving them.

This study has so far offered a critique of education in general and EWP, in

particular. A critique without insights and possibilities for changing things and offering creative ways of being is empty. Consequently, the following sections will attempt to overcome this shortcoming by exploring transformative possibilities for EWP as it relates to national development in Zimbabwe.

C. Transformative Possibilities for EWP in Zimbabwe

The first part of this chapter has described EWP and its centrality in the school curriculum of camp schools in exile during the war of liberation for Zimbabwe's independence. EWP's success in exile is what eventually persuaded the new government at independence to adopt it as its education model for development. Pursuant to this position ZIMFEP was established to undertake small-scale trials with the new curriculum innovation before they could be implemented nation wide.

Fifteen years later, in 1995, ZIMFEP is still pilot-testing the concept of EWP without any indication of when EWP will be adopted nationally. There are many problems which this study has identified as impeding the successful implementation of EWP in pilot schools and, thus, delaying national adoption of this curriculum. What these problems are and ways of overcoming them are critical issues which this section explores.

Government and International Capitalism

Lutchean (1990:176) asks: "How do we construct a discourse which displaces the effects of colonizing gaze while we are under its influence?" This is a major question which needs to be addressed by this study if EWP is to be improved and become a viable alternative to the entrenched colonial education system in practice in Zimbabwe. This question is addressed here with a view to identifying and exploring possibilities which offer new meaning concerning the implementation of EWP and its future role in national development in Zimbabwe.

The conversations for this study have revealed that this relentless colonial gaze has its roots in the international capitalist world order in which the Zimbabwean economy currently operates. After independence the Zimbabwean government, like many developing countries, found itself in need of loans. The World Bank/IMF provided these loans and imposed conditions in the form of economic structural adjustment programs resulting in unprecedented economic stringencies and the imposiyion of severe cutbacks on public spending. These development programs are constantly monitored by the lenders who now use them to blackmail the government from abandoning the programs. Any meaningful development alternatives that the government has tried have been thwarted if they are different from the lenders' capitalist prescriptions because they come under the constant gaze of the World Bank and IMF which keep on pulling the strings.

Wallerstein (1982) has argued that a capitalist development, such as that pursued by the World Bank and IMF, develops the capitalist world-economy as a whole and not an individual country. It is an interrelated process which never lets go a country once it has wrapped its tentacles. He argues that global capitalism:

> Works through a massive, world-scale complex relational networks or social structures, which the process produced, continually reproduce and also continually modified (p.121).

As the tentacles of the World Bank engineered capitalist development model slowly enfold its victims, the global capitalist system has adversely affected EWP in many ways. One way in which EWP is being adversely affected by the global capitalist development model is the unavailability of funds. In the case of Zimbabwe, the World Bank economic planners do not believe in the ability of EWP to bring quick returns for the country. They also find EWP more expensive than western-type academic oriented curriculum. The World Bank has, therefore, refused to fund EWP. This partly explains why the EWP experiment has been less successful and is not yet nationally adopted in Zimbabwe. By

withdrawing funding for EWP, the World Bank has effectively blackmailed the government into abandoning productive education. Van der Gaag (1993:6) has also criticized these and similar World Bank/IMF policies because of their net effect in "destroying the basic human capital on which poor nations must build their future."

How can creative alternatives to education and development be developed if foreign economic giants which are against these forms of education continue to control what shape education and development should take? According to these powerful capitalist multinationals, such as the World Bank, education and development should be viewed from the standpoint of profit margins, just like all other capitalist ventures. They expect a country like Zimbabwe to take this into account when considering other macro economic activities such as debt servicing and currency devaluation, which help attract foreign investment and lead to national development. Will Zimbabwe be better off after swallowing this bitter medicine? Unfortunately, the answer to this question is less encouraging considering experiences of other developing countries that walked this path before. For example, Ghana's debt burden doubled from 1.5 billion US dollars to 3 billion US dollars since 1983 when it adopted World Bank mandated economic structural programs (Ellwood, 1990). According to Ellwood (p.6), the net result of this huge debt servicing problem of developing nations such as Ghana is the massive annual flow of capital from the South to the North, in the form of profits and interests, which now tops "$50 billion even though the principal has hardly been touched."

Given the experiences of other developing countries, it appears that a possible way out for Zimbabwe is to come out of the World Bank economic hold before the tentacles are fully sunk and while the country is still economically stable. This is a very bitter, but neccessary, pill to swallow if the politicians muster enough courage to get out of this 're-colonization' process. This withdrawal will help them pursue productive education alternatives like EWP more creatively without dancing to the tune of the person paying the

piper even when the tune is not in harmony with the piper. The spirit of creating alternatives exists in the Zimbabwean government: what is needed is courage and resolve to do it. That this spirit exists is reflected in a statement by the President of Zimbabwe, Mugabe (1986:8-9), when he said that:

> While we wish to build a new Zimbabwe,...this quest will be frustrated unless we have an educational system that is firmly oriented towards the transformation we seek. I may be bold to say, to change Zimbabwe we must first change the education system.

Global Capitalism's Influence on the Curriculum

The global capitalist development model has also entered the classroom in Zimbabwe. The content of what is taught, how it is taught and for what purposes are now tailor-made to meet the dictates of big business. EWP was adversely affected, in several ways, by dictates of foreign interests during its implementation as evident from observations undertaken during field visits to Taedza Secondary School.

My classroom observations at Taedza school and subsequent conversations with teachers revealed the presence of this external influence in the content and teaching of EWP. I found that while the school teaches both academic and practical subjects, the choice of what to teach and how these are taught are incompatible with EWP approaches and seem to address examination requirements which, in turn, are crafted to address the capitalist development model. For example, EWP requires that the acquisition of classroom knowledge should be done in tandem with the process of exposing students to productive and entrepreneurial skills which lead to the production and marketing of goods and services which are relevant to the development needs of the country. But what I found was that the woodwork syllabus, for example, requires students to produce items such as egg trays, toothbrush holders, toilet paper holders, etc. which are irrelevant and of no use to rural communities from which the majority of students come. These items are effigies of

global capitalism and could only be marketed in settings that have benefitted from capitalist development models such as urban areas. The rural community from where the majority of people, including students exposed to this curriculum, come have no use and find no value in these artefacts. They have no meaning to them because their development needs require a community-oriented development model to address them. This is where the relevance of EWP comes in, had it not been undermined by global capitalism, because it promotes a community-oriented development model.

Curriculum implementation at Taedza school answered more to examination requirements rather than to EWP requirements. Teachers at this school argued that the teaching methods they used were dictated by the desire to finish lengthy syllabuses in order to meet examination requirements. Therefore, they were forced to use teaching methods which enabled them to cover the syllabus in the shortest time possible. These methods included rote learning and lecture methods associated with a western-type academic curriculum of colonial days. The teachers also used past examination questions to teach students. Teachers were concerned more with passing students than utilizing content preparing them for life as required of EWP curriculum.

Foreign influence on economic development, with its emphasis on output in education at the expense of everything else, is partly to blame for this preoccupation with examinations. As Furlong (1988:11) has observed, when teachers are faced with this situation, they assume the role of "quality controller standing by the conveyer belt of education, rejecting two out of three products as sub-standard." Teachers compete with each other to produce the most passes while students compete to pass with the hope of getting the few jobs on the market.

Government Support for EWP

Government policy makers and educational planners are also to blame for this

emphasis on examinations. They are well aware that EWP thrives on creativity, practicality, initiative and enthusiasm on the part of teachers and students and yet their policies and plans do not take this into consideration. Since EWP promotes cooperative spirit and not competition, it also requires more time and commitment from students and teachers who should be exposed to productive and entrepreneurial skills while engaged in the production of marketable goods and services.

Government planners need to be more realistic and clear in their plans. They need to be clear of what kind of education fits into Zimbabwe's development needs and how such an education system is to be supported in order for it to sustain national development. But as Minister Farai observed in our conversations, policy planning in Zimbabwe is influenced much more by the World Bank/IMF lending conditions and not the needs and realities of the country. EWP policies should be planned in a way which takes into account factors which affect its successful implementation. For example, EWP has to stop being examined through conventional examination systems such as those used for 'O' Level examinations. It requires different assessment procedures and criteria which can measure student progress in the acquisition of practical skills, initiativeness, leadership qualities, ability to integrate theory with practice and other important attributes.

In its planning, government also has to consider its contribution in enhancing the implementation of EWP. Conversations and reflections of participants in this study indicate that the government was either not clear about its role in facilitating the implementation of EWP or found itself in a dilemma so that it could not support EWP because of the lending conditions imposed by the World Bank/IMF. In addition, the attitude of senior government officials cited by Nhundu (1992) and Mutumbuka (1985) together with the reward structure of the Ministry of Education which promotes teachers on the basis of examination results further confounded the implementation of EWP in Zimbabwe. As a result, EWP schools such as Taedza are not free to be creative and initiate

appropriate teaching approaches compatible with EWP practices because they are aware that they are not rewarded for these efforts.

Status of ZIMFEP

The transfer of teachers and school administrators from ZIMFEP schools by senior government officials predisposed against EWP results in lack of continuity in the implementation of EWP in these schools. In addition, the lack of criteria controlling the appointment of teachers to these schools means that ZIMFEP schools may end up being staffed by teachers who do not subscribe to the concept of EWP. This shows that ZIMFEP is for the most part powerless in the face of the enforcement of conditions antagonistic to the implementation of EWP. ZIMFEP needs independent power and the autonomy to hire and fire teachers in its schools. Similarly, ZIMFEP should get more discretionary powers over all curriculum issues in its schools. ZIMFEP needs to assume full control over its schools and become completely accountable for the implementation of EWP. The government's role in all this should be to facilitate and not impede the implementation of EWP in ZIMFEP schools.

Meanwhile, ZIMFEP, on its part, should be more aggressive in its implementation approaches. It has to stop passing the buck and break the cycle of blame and exoneration involving itself, teachers and the Ministry of Education. Towards this end, ZIMFEP has to carry out thorough prognosis to determine what hinders EWP implementation and resolve to work collaboratively with teachers towards eradicating these constraints. It should abandon its current attitude which tends to polarize relations with teachers whom they blame for lack of commitment and dedication to EWP.

ZIMFEP Public Relations Thrust

There is a certain amount of apathy creeping into ZIMFEP as reflected in the

conversations which revealed that ZIMFEP had inadvertently agreed to co-exist and passively accept incompatible demands and directives from the Ministry of Education to the detriment of EWP. ZIMFEP has to abandon this stance and become more assertive and aggressively market its curriculum even at the risk of upsetting some senior Ministry officials. For EWP to succeed, ZIMFEP has to fight for its own against 'sheathed power' bureaucrats in the Ministry of Education and other related Ministries. ZIMFEP should realize that sheathed power is dangerous because it 'conceals or camouflages' its own means of operation (Foucault, 1980). The commitment of these sheathed power elites has also been questioned by Colin (1993) because of their interests and motivation which have been shown by history to be domesticating and subordinating instead of increasing the social autonomy of the previously oppressed people.

It is ZIMFEP's responsibility to make EWP a viable and attractive alternative to the current conventional education system. People are likely to be attracted to an alternative education system if they perceive it as offering learners a solid foundation in life and a more secure future. ZIMFEP can do this by making EWP schools self-sufficient and cost-effective so that students do not only receive an education and training in specific vocations, but that proceeds from the sale of goods and services produced by the schools help alleviate parental burden in the payment of user fees. Meanwhile practical skills acquired by students should provide them with an edge on the job market and, in addition, generate self-employment opportunities which students from conventional schools have no capacity to do. This way EWP students would not queue up with 200 000 school leavers each year for 10 000 jobs created annually by the Zimbabwean economy.

The African Wisdom Tradition

EWP curriculum in Zimbabwe would be made more relevant if it is made to respond to the African within than to the African without who is made from colonial

dictates. The African within is what the African child inherited from the African wisdom tradition which blacks are exposed to in their early formative age before entering formal schools. It is also the life that the black child lives when he/she comes back home from school. By identifying and building on those experiences which are in resonance with the child's background, schools would provide a lot of relevance and sense of identity to the education of the child.

Western influence to the African way of life has always imposed the white people's ways of knowing on Africans. An example which illustrates this imposition of alien cultural values and norms is cited by Taylor (1963:22) who graphically refers to an incident which happened at the All Africa Conference of Churches in 1958 in Ibadan:

> British and American 'experts' had agreed that this was to be Africans' conference run in Africa's way. But it appeared that the African leaders intended to have no agenda but to allow the findings to emerge from free, informal discussion, the experts felt constrained to take a hand, and once again Western methods prevailed.

Such has been the history of colonialism where the African ways of thinking and doing things were relentlessly thwarted by the imposition of western ways of knowing. Current World Bank/IMF directives for development in Zimbabwe and other African countries is manifestly a continuation of colonial traditions which imposed western ways of thinking, being and seeing things.

As EWP educators in Zimbabwe we have to explore our African wisdom tradition and seek those of its elements which will complement and strengthen our productive education curriculum endeavours. We have to look at what it was that made pre-colonial education and ways of preparing the young for adult life that successful.

An explorartion of the African wisdom tradition in search of what it can offer to strengthen possibilities for the implementation of EWP reveals four major areas relevant to the development of EWP in Zimbabwe. The development model of the African wisdom

tradition, its examination system, and the teaching and learning approaches can all be combined to provide creative possibilities for EWP. The power of the African story telling can also be used to contextualize and teach EWP.

The pre-colonial development model can be characterized as a community-oriented development strategy in which the development of the individual was inextricably linked to and directed at meeting community needs. Personal development was community driven in the sense that it found meaning only when the individual was able to contribute to the development of the community. From the community viewpoint, the pre-colonial development model reflected a community's will and commitment to a common purpose. For example, if a community undertook a development project such as sinking a well, the well was considered to be for all and sundry. This development model was characterized by the principles of cooperation, collectivism and communalism which brought the community together.

It is clear that EWP can locate itself within the framework of this development model. Some of the major aims of EWP, notably the inculcation of cooperative spirit in students, self-reliance, self employment and community development, show that EWP is an extension of the community-oriented development model of the African wisdom tradition. This means that EWP is grounded in the African wisdom tradition and represents an improvement in the development practices of pre-colonial period. It is important that EWP should be packaged and sold to the nation in its proper historical context which reveals how it is in resonance with the African wisdom traditions and contemporary development needs of rural communities. As part of ZIMFEP's public relations offensive, EWP should be packaged in a way which convinces parents and skeptics that it is compatible with and promotes African development needs.

Mugabe (1986:8) came out strongly in support of such a world which is more attuned to an African way of being than the colonialist world-system. For him this

expressed itself best through the socialist philosophy that takes account of the African wisdom tradition:

> We seek to build a socialist society in Zimbabwe. For us socialism means a self-reliant egalitarian society founded on the humanitarian values of our own traditions infused with and enriched by the progressive thought of modern scientific socialism. Our schools, our entire educational system, must inculcate a socialist consciousness among our young people... Our schools must not merely teach such commitment, they must themselves practice it as well.

What Mugabe is saying to me shows a disappointment with the capitalist system of education and development of which he had personal experience. It also shows that he realized that socialism is closest and in resonance to an African way of becoming but at the same time realizing that we need not go back to a 'static' African tradition, but borrow from it and infuse it with science and technology.

Given that EWP is consistent with and promotes the development model of the African wisdom tradition, how can this wisdom tradition inform EWP concerning new possibilities involving teaching and learning approaches? The banking teaching and rote learning methods currently used in the delivery of EWP have their roots in the western-type academic education of colonial time, hence, these methods are unsuitable for a practical-oriented education whose roots lie in African wisdom tradition. Accordingly, practical ways of teaching and learning EWP should be explored using experiences from the African wisdom tradition world.

The dominant learning method during the African wisdom tradition period was experiential learning. This is because education during this period was very practically oriented and involved preparing learners to play meaningful roles in their communities. The community was one big classroom in which learners were exposed to various skills and vocations of their lived world. The environment was the greatest teacher from which emerged Freire's praxis that informed their manipulation of, control and coexistence with

the environment. The dominant teaching methods were equally practical and included apprenticeship, case studies, project work, simulations and story telling. While these teaching methods are, admittedly, more time consuming than comparable banking methods, practical subject 'syllabuses' used during the pre-colonial period were more focused and less diverse than current syllabuses of EWP that teachers in this study complained of being too long.

Syllabuses used during the pre-colonial era were designed to prepare learners for specific roles in their communities such as blacksmith, artist, hunter, farmer, sculpture, etc. On the contrary, current EWP curriculum is very diverse and the syllabuses too long. Students are expected to do anything from eight to twelve examinable practical and academic subjects. There is, therefore, a real limitation on the time available for teachers to adequately treat all subjects, especially practical subjects which require more time consuming teaching methods. Similarly, the examination of practical subjects was geared to assess skills acquisition through the production of quality marketable goods rather the reproduction of banked knowledge.

The African wisdom tradition holds a wealth of educational experience which can be explored to strengthen EWP and offer creative possibilities for transforming national development in Zimbabwe. ZIMFEP should be made aware of these powerful possibilities that exist in facilitating the implementation of EWP and its future role in national development. Similarly, policy makers and educational planners should also be required to share this experience from the African wisdom tradition.

Finally, our EWP curriculum can also utilize story telling with stories which students can identify with and stop telling them stories of modern ways of being. The stories must be liberating stories. Stories which can arouse natural curiosity in children and make them want to know the truth behind global systems of development vis-a-vis the need to be relevant. With good knowledge of both worlds students can be persuaded to work

for the success of a relevant world order.

Communication and Decision Making

Another problem facing EWP implementation reported in this study was the lack of communication between policy makers, planners, ZIMFEP and the schools regarding the expectations of each level of operation in the implementation of EWP. For example, the Ministry of Education produced a policy on EWP which ZIMFEP was required to implement, yet there are no terms of reference or agreement with ZIMFEP regarding either the expectations or modus operandi well known to all cooperating parties. ZIMFEP took up the challenge to put the policy into practice in its ten pilot schools only to be frustrated during implementation when Ministry of Education officials disrupted the implementation process by arbitrarily transfering teachers and school administrators from pilot schools without consulting ZIMFEP. Similarly, there was no clarity concerning the reward system for teachers and other personnel in these schools. The current reward structure does not recognize teachers who excel in the implementation of EWP, while the examination system has the same effect on students in pilot schools. As a result teachers and students in the schools are focussing on examinations because they provide them with recognition and recognizable credentials.

ZIMFEP is aware of all these problems but is either unwilling or afraid to challenge the Ministry of Education to own up to its policy commitments. As participants in this study would agree, both ZIMFEP and the Ministry are playing hide and seek and avoid sitting down together to iron out these problems which hinder the implementation of EWP.

According to the participants in this study, no two-way communication exists in which the interests and desires of teachers, students and parents are given a platform by bureaucrats. The examination oriented curriculum passed on to teachers is reduced to a vehicle by which

the will and world view of policy makers and planners are imposed on teachers and students. It is assumed that everything learners need to know has already been determined by those who know better. Education becomes simply a matter of passing prescriptions. The students' only task is to absorb and regurgitate the information when asked for it in the examinations. What kind of adults such students will become is not addressed.

The possibility here is to engage in the decision making process all those who would be affected by these policy decisions. This could be done in different ways and at different levels of involvement. Participation of interested parties would take place at various planning stages. This could give students the opportunity to make an input and ensure that their world is not a 'static thing' to which they are simply required to accept and adapt. Students and parents would, therefore, be involved in a type of praxis that is necessary "for people to become participants in shaping their economic, social, cultural and subjective formations that affect their lives" (Freire, 1993:xii).

D. Positioning Myself in the Dialogue of Education and Development

And when we speak we are afraid
our words will not he heard
nor welcomed
but when we are silent
we are still afraid
- Audre Lorde -

In this section I reflect on my experiences as a woman and my positioning in issues of education and development in colonial and post colonial Zimbabwe and in the west where I received most of my university education. This section also reveals my anticipated contribution to EWP and development issues in Zimbabwe when I go back after completing my graduate studies. I will continue to write about EWP and its role in national development as I see them informed by my experiences and my subject position in the

world forming those experiences. By sharing reflections of my experiences and what I see happening around me with other development educators and critics, I hope to contribute to greater understanding of issues of education and development in Zimbabwe and provoke/inspire further hermeneutic inquiry into the role of education in post colonial development.

The self-reflection which both concludes this study and attests a reaffirmation of my commitment to EWP and its role in national development is presented as being informed by the different worlds which have formed me:

a. African traditional life.

b. colonial education.

c Zimbabwe liberation war.

d. post independence teaching experience.

e. graduate education in the West.

I am persuaded, through my experience and my future writings on EWP and development, to present myself not as an expert, but as a person willing to open up my prejudices and listen and be able to take in new meanings of the world and also present an improved world view informed by a hermeneutic merging of horizons. I will also present a femininist perspective in my writings because I am a woman, a position which is not without its problems. Some of these problems have been described by Minh-ha (1989:28) as reflecting the uniqueness of the feminine position:

> Writing in the feminine... How do you inscribe difference without bursting into a series of euphoric narcissistic accounts of yourself and your own kind? Without indulging in a marketable romanticism or a naive whining about your condition? In other words, how do you forget without annihilating? Between the twin chasms of navel-gazing and navel-erasing, the ground is narrow and slippery. None of us can pride ourselves on being sure-footed there. Feminism can be iconoclastic, and all the more so when it calls itself Third World. We have all let ourselves be infected with the leprosy of egotism, which remains the most difficult disease to cure, for

> what egotists, like lepers, inevitably undergo is a *loss of feeling* and are consequently apt to injure ourselves without realizing it. I can let neither light nor air enter when I close myself up and exist as a crystallized I, be this I feminine or masculine, female or male.

Minh-ha is cautioning against getting lost in oneself and forgetting what the purpose of my writing is. I will take this warning creatively and strive to keep focused and expose myself to the criticism of other EWP and development educators.

Traditional Influence

My traditional upbringing, before I went through formal education, brought me into my first contact with education and development. The traditional upbringing starts from the home and then extends into the immediate community. In our homes we were exposed to different upbringings. For example, I grew up in a family of eight where there was only one boy who was the first born. I was the last born in the family. When I grew up the boy had already grown up and left the village. As a result the girls in my family grew up doing both 'boy' and 'girl' chores in the home and within the community. Accordingly, my upbringing in the family did not sensitize me to traditional male and female roles. My sisters and myself took up all tasks and assignments in the home without any gender sensitivities expected of traditional upbringing.

It was in the local community where I began experiencing that there were 'boy' and 'girl' tasks. As my exposure to and participation in our immediate local community increased as I grew up, I began to realize that my early childhood experiences in our family, on gender awareness and task allocation, were different from those of my childhood friends from families where the two sexes were well represented. Within such families and the community at large, the tradition expected males to be involved in herding cattle, milking cows, tilling the lands and doing other male tasks while females were expected to cook, do dishes, weed the fields, take care of the kids and do laundry. In

addition, boys were treated differently because of the expectations that tradition held for them as heads of their future families. For example, if a family of four girls and four boys had not enough money to send all children to school, boys received preference over girls. Accordingly, most boys in such families would go to high school not because they were more able than girls, unlike in our family where ability was the primary consideration.

The community did not completely preclude the participation of girls from community development tasks that were traditionally for boys. Where communal community projects were concerned, all families in the community were expected to participate by contributing labour. Thus, my sisters and I participated in community projects alongside boys from other families and we did male tasks which we were accustomed to in our household. Our community leaders viewed community members' participation in community projects as a necessary contribution towards community development. This is a statement of our African wisdom tradition approach to development. It was the collective responsibility of all households in the community to contribute to community development projects.

For my family and the community, education was considered important for family, personal development and development beyond the community. Most educated people lived and worked away from the community but were expected to support their families and community. Thus what I learnt from my traditional upbringing was that to educate was to develop both the individual and the nation. According to Busia (1964) and Al-Shashi and Moore (1978), children are given the accumulated knowledge of the community to enable them to play adult roles and so ensure the survival of their offsprings and the continuity of the community. Such are the African ways of teaching which I will creatively try to bring up in my writings on EWP and national development in order to bring back meaning into the education and development issues of the African which has been lost to colonial and western impositions.

Colonial Influences

Colonial education opened me up to the outer world but, at the same time, locked me into its restricted ideas of education, development and a woman. What I learnt about education was from a narrow representation of what an African should learn and not from a holistic approach to education and how it can develop the whole nation, and not sections of the nation. It is in school where I was first introduced to individualism. I was learning for myself, in contrast to my traditional upbringing which taught me that education was for family, community and personal benefit.

Through colonial education I first came into contact with gender issues in education. This was most evident in Bible studies and the language of instruction, English. The English language used the generic term 'man' to refer to people and also referred to people as 'mankind'. The use of pronouns 'his', 'him', 'hers', 'she' was strange for a person whose mother language, Shona, does not have sexist pronouns. The Christian scriptures, on the other hand, were teaching us that women were an afterthought of God who extracted them from a man's rib long after the man was made. Women were not only presented as the weaker sex, but often portrayed the worst, among them Eve The Snake, Delilah, Jezebel and Mary Magdalene. The school highlighted the gender divide and conditioned us to these positions as given.

From colonialism I learnt that the individual is educated for himself/herself and that development is to be treated similarly: "Each man (sic) for himself (sic) and God for us all". Racism worsened my perception of colonial ideas because as I grew up it attempted to condition me, as the Scriptures tried on women, into accepting that I was of an 'inferior' race and that I should believe in White Supremacy. From a colonial conspiratorial view, the hierarchy of abilities and respect was judged in descending order starting from the white man, white woman, black man and the black woman last. My future writings on EWP will demystify this and present the role of EWP in personal and national development from a

non-sexist viewpoint. EWP should develop all students regardless of sex, so that their true value can be measured in terms of what they acquire and their contribution to national development.

Influences from the War of Resistance

As mentioned earlier in the autobiographical section of this study, the years of the war of resistance against colonialism took me and thousands of other youngsters away from home and into exile in neighbouring countries like Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia. It was later during the war while in Mozambique that I trained as a teacher, later became a teacher educator and continued to work in camp schools.

Teacher education programs in the camps involved ideological re-orientation, attitudinal change, productive skills acquisition, training in the theory and practice of EWP, self reliance and problem solving and dialogical teaching methods (Nhundu, 1988; Mudenge, 1984 and Mutumbuka, 1984). This is what I learnt as a teacher and later taught as a teacher educator. We were also taught that development is through self reliance and self sustenance endeavours. We also firmly believed that we were our own liberators; politically, socially and economically.

The war also changed my perception of myself as a woman. Military training and promotion within the army did not discriminate between men and women. We all received the same military training irrespective of gender and were promoted on merit so that we had men and women commanders. I started to perceive a woman in the way I had grown to perceive her in my childhood, as one who could do anything she sets her mind on and with support and encouragement from those around her.

Post-independence Influence

With the attainment of independence in 1980 we went back home to a Zimbabwe

where colonial and revolutionary ideas came into contact with a clash. I went to teach at one of ZIMFEP's EWP schools before I joined the ZIMFEP Secretariat. The syllabuses were for the preparation of 'O' and 'A' Level examinations from Britain. Education was narrow-minded in that sense and did not prepare the young to take up adult positions as what the African culture and the revolutionary years had taught me. Thus issues of national development were not incorporated into the education system. ZIMFEP was at that time at the stage of building its pilot schools which were cited on large derelict commercial farms destroyed during the war.

There was also a conflict of interest with the MOE bureaucracy, some of whom did not believe in EWP and the teacher education system developed in exile. As a result of this conflict teachers from exile were being transferred to other schools or sent for "retraining" by MOE bureaucrats. This was done under the guise of "normalizing" pilot schools although their real intention was to minimize the political influence of ZIMFEP schools (Nhundu, 1992 and Mutumbuka, 1985). I was among those to be sent for re-training. Instead I chose university education in search of a voice. This is where I came into contact with western ideas of education and development, especially later during my graduate studies in Canada.

The Influence of Western Education

Studying as a graduate student in a western developed country has had its positive and negative influence in my thinking of issues of education and development. The negatives have been in the way that this experience has confirmed that Zimbabwe's education and development mirror those of the western world. In education this is confirmed by the implementation problems that teachers in this study faced in Zimbabwe. In the conversations for this study participant teachers cited the lack of time as one of their major constraints to teaching EWP effectively. The works of McLaren (1986), Giroux

(1983) and Goodlad (1982) also cite similar complaints by teachers in the west. This connectedness of western education to that of Zimbabwe is not surprising since Zimbabwe's education system is still based on western academically-oriented curriculum models.

The most positive aspects of my graduate education has been the exposure it has given me to issues like post-modernism, post-colonialism, development education and feminism. Being away from home has afforded me the chance of a critical distanciation from my EWP world of work. I have been able to reflect on a world that was and still remains my own with a critical eye; a world which I now realize has so much connectedness within itself and the external West.

Feminist writing has been an area I never seriously thought about until now. This is because my personal and work experiences had not triggered this need to know. But as I got a chance to read more into it during my graduate years I realize that I am shaped by a gendered world, so my thinking has to pay attention to it. I have started to question the gendered tint of the ideas of EWP and development that I hold. Minh-ha (1989:89) writes about this problematic situation when she says:

> She has been warned of the risk she incurs by letting words run off the rail, time and again tempted by the desire to gear herself to the accepted norms. But where has obedience led her? At best, to the satisfaction of a "made-woman", capable of achieving as high a mastery of discourse as that of a male establishment in power. Immediately gratified, she will, as years go by, sink into oblivion, a fate she inescapably shares with her foresisters.

I do not want to sink into oblivion but to have a voice. Hooks (1989) has written more about the need for women to take up a liberated voice and avoid speaking as "other". Accordingly, she writes:

> It is therefore crucial that we search our hearts and our words to see if our true aim is liberating, to make sure they do not suppress, trap, or confine. Significantly, knowing who is listening provides an indication of how our voices are heard... To

> know our audience, to know who listens, we must be in dialogue. We must be speaking with and not just speaking to. In hearing responses, we come to understand whether our words act to resist, transform, to move (p16).

Such is the direction that I want my future writings on EWP and education and development to take.

In Pursuit of my Commitment

A reflection of myself and my world afforded by this study has given me the chance to take stock of my foreclosed prejudices about EWP in Zimbabwe and national development struggles. It has also shown me the way of fulfilling my own commitment to issues of education and development. It is through my writings that I intend to open up debate on issues of our history which have shaped us, our present which is imprisoning us, and explore possibilities for a future which is committed to change.

In my writings the commitment to change our world will invoke greater participation by women in the process of shaping Zimbabwe's education and development needs. I will explore and incite debate on the thesis that history, politics and culture has made men in Zimbabwe largely responsible for shaping our world. Colonial history, as mentioned earlier, used Christianity and missionaries to craft the Zimbabwean woman in a way which makes her identify with and accept the position of Eve The Serpent, Delilah and Jezebel. The African culture has, on the other hand, made her a silent listener while westernization and power politics have made her the led and never the leader.

Kondo (1990:307) supports the above argument when she writes about the "crafted selves" who are enacted in specific situations of power, history and culture:

> Selves are not separated from context, which is the situation in which they are performed, the audience to whom the narrative production of self is addressed, the exclusions implicit in any construction of "self", the historical and political/economic discourses, and the culturally shaped narrative conventions that constructed 'the self'.

This is my call for the meaningful inclusion of women in the shaping of Zimbabwe and the education of its youth. After all, women are the primary teachers of children in the home, pre-school and even during early years of elementary education. Why should there be no greater involvement of women in educational planning, curriculum development and other important policy issues in Zimbabwe? I will strive not to make women remain as they have been crafted by history, politics and culture. I would like to help rupture the fixity of the woman's position of silence and help us find voices as educators. I want to take up the position of what Kristeva (1980) has called a subject-in the-making. This position, if taken up by all educated women in advantaged positions in Zimbabwe, will help us to continuously view our culture as important at the same time working through the power politics surrounding us. We may find, as Kondo (1990) reported, conflict, ambiguity, irony and workings of power in the very process of asserting ourselves which could lead to further insights and other more liberating strategies to explore.

This subject-in-the-making positioning in terms of education and development is described in figure 2 below. Figure 2 conceives of my positioning in juxtaposition with my work and the world around as consisting of interacting spheres in which the three constantly influence each other in search of deeper understanding. In interacting with the world (Zone I), I, as writer and

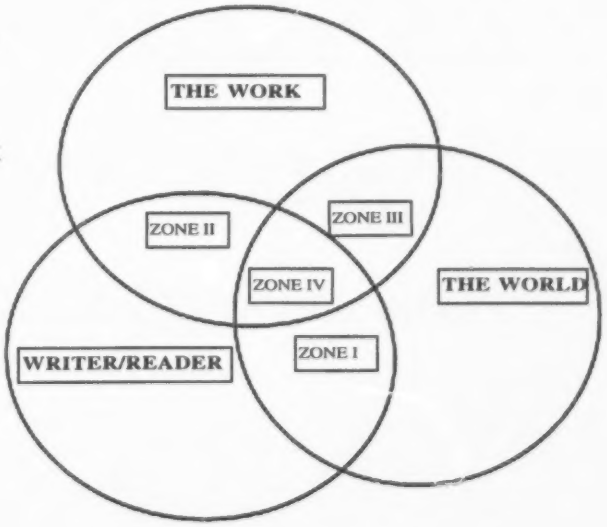

Figure 2 : Understanding the Self, the Text and the World

reader, learn from the world through exposure and reading the work of others around me. I also interact with the work that I produce as I reflect on it, modify my views and improve on my work (Zone II). Zone III, representing the interface between my work and the world, represents my contribution to the world which I strive to change through my work, while the world continues to influence me to change my views and my understanding and enlarge my horizons. Finally, zone IV represents a coming together of the three spheres to provide a holistic view enacted through dialogue between the writer/reader, the work and the world. Zone IV also underlines the interdependence of the three as they hermeneutically merge their horizons in pursuit of deeper understanding.

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